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# **International Journal of African Development**

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**Western Michigan University  
College of Arts & Sciences  
Department of Economics  
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### Editorial Note

It is a pleasure to share the 9<sup>th</sup> Issue of the International Journal of African Development (IJAD) Vol. 5.1 for Spring 2018. This issue covers seven research papers that entail a wide range of topics of African development challenges and opportunities. The contributors explore topics such the danger of tribal identity politics based on case studies, energy transition challenges for sustainable development, the impact of motivation on employee performance in insurance companies, whether inclusive growth promote effective regional integration among African states, the value of indigenous knowledge for development debate, a comparative study of breaking the poverty trap across African states, and integrating the youth into politics and economics for the African Development Agenda 2063.

The contributing authors explore African sustainable challenges with case studies from Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, and including regional and continental issues for Africa. The origins of the contributions include universities and research institutions from countries such as Ethiopia, Nigeria, Germany, Turkey, Uganda, Lesotho, Namibia, and Japan.

With this brief note, I invite our readers from African States and around the world to read the details of each paper in this volume and share them with your colleagues. I am happy to report readership of IJAD published papers in past issues are widely read and downloaded by thousands around the world. At this time, we have a back log of submissions that we plan to include in future issues after a peer review of the papers.

Finally, I thank all members of the IJAD Team, including our copy editor's excellent editing from participants who often have native languages that are not English. As well as the copy editor, there are others including our ScholarWorks team who work voluntarily including yours truly. In the future, we invite our readers to kindly donate funding as much as you can to Western Michigan University to continue both the work of IJAD and African Development Policy Research. We would also value advice regarding receiving funding from International Grant Agencies.

I wish you all happy reading of the important papers in this issue.

Sincerely,

Sisay Asefa, PhD, Professor of Economics  
Editor in Chief of the *International Journal of African Development*

# **The Tigray Identity and the Paradox in the Securitization of the Oromo and Amhara Identities in Ethiopia**

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## **Abstract**

Tigray's ethnic nationality is the minority identity in the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a coalition of four political parties under the leadership of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). For decades, the ruling party has governed by pitting the Oromo and Amhara against one another. Accordingly, the Oromo-Amhara solidarity is the greatest threat to the Ethiopian government. Within the framework of the Copenhagen school, we analyzed the securitization of the two majority identities. This essay is split into two sections. The first examines why and how the Oromo and Amhara identities have been securitized by the dominant force of TPLF within the governing EPRDF coalition. The second section examines the implications and consequences of this securitization. I argue that the securitization, while a natural choice in many respects, has perhaps been detrimental to the overall security of the Ethiopia's Tigray-dominated government that perceives the Oromo and Amhara as a serious threat to Ethiopia's leadership.

## **The TPLF Political Party as the Securitizing Actor**

As an authoritarian government and noncompetitively elected party state, the TPLF led government is deeply concerned with issues of legitimacy, and assert that it has the right to rule all those within its borders. Although the TPLF established the EPRDF in order to gain a national base and legitimacy in Ethiopia, it never lost its minority identification, and this has always been a source of insecurity (Tadesse, & Young, 2003). The EPRDF is therefore left with a dilemma – being an umbrella of ethno-national fronts of which the TPLF forms 6% of the ethnic portion, but it is the dominant political force of the country. On such a dubious platform of legitimacy and as the leaders of a 'minority,' the TPLF "either does not have, or has failed to create, a domestic political and social consensus of sufficient strength to eliminate the large-scale use of force" (Buzan, 1983, p. 94). If they are to remain in power, the TPLF clearly needs to build on this position because of the importance of "national identity and social cohesion in terms of the degree to which the population identifies with the nation-state and to accept its legitimate role in their lives" (Jackson, 2007, p. 203). The EPRDF therefore has to both appear inclusive while simultaneously promoting "the ANDM [Amhara National Democratic Movement], OPDO [Oromo People Democratic Organization] and the SEPDM [Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement] to the vanguard of the people of the People's Republic" (Ashine, 2012) as this is where its main volume of support comes from. However, the EPRDF's ethnic policy has empowered some groups but has not been accompanied by dialogue and reconciliation. Real power in Ethiopia is in the hands of the TPLF. The other parties in the governing collisions are puppets,

and TPLF is their puppet master (International Crisis Group, 2009). The TPLF, therefore, is the securitizing actor, as it “securitize(s) issues by declaring something, a referent object, existentially threatened” (Buzan, Wæver, & de Wilde, 1998, P. 36)

### **The Tigrayans as the Referent Object of Security**

Referent objects are “things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival” (Buzan, Wæver, & de Wilde, 1998, P. 36). In this case, the referent object is the Tigrayan’s ethnic identity, as referent objects “can be collective identities” (Emmers, 2007, p. 172). These minorities fought to liberate their ethnic elites from the oppressive military regimes. However, due to domestic tensions at all corners of the country, the Tigrayans along with some representatives from the majority Oromo and Amhara populations formed allies to be called the EPRDF.

### **The Reasons for Securitizing the Oromo and Amhara Identities**

Why has the TPLF political party as the securitizing actor chosen the Tigrayan identity as its referent object? Essentially, securitizing the Oromo and Amhara identities is a means to an end, that end being ethnic dominance and regime security.

#### **Extraordinary measures of securitizing the Oromo and Amhara identities:**

#### ***The Ethnic Classification Project from the Transitional Government to the Federal Democratic Republic (1991-1994).***

One method used by the TPLF led by the ruling political coalition has been that of naming and classifying ethnic groups. Meles Zenawi (the former PM) engineered a one-party rule for the TPLF and his Tigrayan inner circle with the complicity of other ethnic elites that were co-opted into the ruling alliance, the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). The Front promised freedom, democracy and ethnic devolution but became highly centralized and tightly controlled the economy and suppressed political, social, ethnic and religious liberties. Ethiopia’s political system and society have grown increasingly unstable largely because the TPLF has become increasingly repressive, while failing to implement the policy of ethnic federalism it devised over twenty-five years ago to accommodate the land’s varied ethnic identities. The result has been greater political centralization associated with ethnicization of grievances. The TPLF has remained the center of political decision-making in the EPRDF and kept the principles and discourses of its guerrilla years. This includes Leninist “democratic centralism,” in which the executive and central committees make all major political decisions, and then transmit orders to junior officials and administrators. “Revolutionary democracy” that advocates capitalism and free market is promoted, but at the same time the state and party has retained iron control through five-year development plans. Meles’s absolute pivotal role developed during the armed struggle to overthrow the Derg – the military regime of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam that ruled from 1974 to 1991 – when he was a core member of the TPLF, an ethno-Marxist guerrilla movement founded in the northern Tigray region (International Crisis Group, 2012).



### ***Exoticization of the Oromo and Amhara Identities as a means of securitization.***

One of the more obtuse ways of securitizing the Oromo and Amhara identities is by dominating the internal other. This is because “the objectified portrayal of majorities as exoticized is essential to the construction of the Tigray’s minority, the very formulation of the Ethiopia ‘nation’ itself” (Yalew, 2014). Regarding naming, this intense othering is designed to quantify the majorities as commodities rather than equal footed citizens. It seems “the state has turned its gaze upon the internal other, engaging in a formalized, commodified, oriental orientalism that may be focused on the minorities but represents a long tradition of fascination with the outsider in Ethiopian society” (Saed, 1978 in Yalew, 2014). Securitizing the Oromo and Amhara identities in this unique manner and emasculating the other is essential to the EPRDF. “Belonging to a distinct culture tells us ‘who we are,’ and it is this process of self-identification which is key to nations” (Roe, 2007, p. 218). This non-violent and arguably non-repressive means of objectification nevertheless constitutes a speech act, as “the exoticization of majorities essentializes the imagined identity of the Tigrayans and reaffirms Tigre feelings of superiority” (Yalew, 2014) is crucial to the existence of the regime.

As ethnic mobilization was the TPLF’s means to seize power, it now appears that the ethnic polarization was created as a result of threatening the state power structure and national cohesion. There is insecurity when sharing the national agenda, mistrust against the government and other ethnic groups, many times irrational (political and economic) competition, and a new dynamic of the ‘we vs. them’ conception (Berhe, 2008). The previous Prime Minister Meles was the unchallenged intellectual and ideological guide of the party and government, and as a result, had accumulated a disproportionate share of power in the Ethiopian state. He had successfully and effectively marginalized his TPLF opponents and concentrated power to his own hands and those of close colleagues (Tadesse, & Young, 2003). Moreover, the TPLF promoted hatred of the other two major ethnicities (The Oromo and Amhara). They gave names for Oromo “Tebab” and for Amara “Temketgna.” The name “Tebab” in Amharic language stands for ‘Narrow Oromo Nationalists’ as the Oromos believe in Oromoness, and “Temketgna” stands for ‘Arrogant Amhara Nationalists’ as the Amharas believe in Ethiopianess. Indeed, it is a deliberate ‘speech act’ used for the last 25 years to subjugate the other ethnic majorities and solidify the referent object (the Tigray identity) at the center. It helped the TPLF to increase its power by dividing the two largest ethnic groups.

### **The Securitization Process**

The most notable feature of the securitization process of the Oromo and Amhara identities is that it is circular. The securitizing actor (the TPLF) securitizes the Oromo and Amhara identities (which the EPRDF is also comprised of) from an internal threat (other Ethiopian citizens) by subverting and subsuming the internal other (Amharas and Oromos). While “transforming an issue into a security question only requires the audience’s acknowledgement that it is indeed a threat” (Emmers, 2007, p. 173), in this case, the audience is the referent object of which the securitizing actor is also a part. Therefore, admission of the existence of a threat is pre-determined as long as

the audience (Tigrayan Ethiopians) keep faith in the securitizing actor (the TPLF), which it is not going to do whilst the securitizing actor has securitized their identity. This therefore legitimizes “the claims of the state to have authority over citizens as citizens [which] provide a source of its ability to exert violence against them” (Krause, & Williams, 1997, p. 45). This logical process is difficult to follow, but it boils down to a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby, as the EPRDF articulates, the threat is an “existential threat to a referent object” (Emmers, 2007, p. 170) and hence propagates its own existence because “in practice, the idea of state security – the integrity and functioning of the institutions and idea of the state – and regime security – the security of the ruling elite from violent challenge – become indistinguishable” (Jackson, 2007, p. 205).

### **The Implications and Consequences of Securitization**

#### **Marginalizing the dominant Ethnic Nationalities - the Oromo and Amhara.**

The fall-out from the securitization of the Oromo and Amhara identities was in many ways quite predictable. Favoring the minority ethnic group and trying to dominate other cultures is usually met with ill feeling and violent resistance. Ethiopia has been left with the lingering problem of large marginalized groups, which have implications for the threat towards territorial control, and ultimately, for sovereignty. The net result of this failed forcible integration is that the EPRDF faces continuing ethnic unrest amongst ‘majority’ people (particularly in Oromia and Amhara) exacerbated by an assertive Tigrayan nationalism that the EPRDF has itself encouraged (directly and indirectly) in a bid to bolster its legitimacy by highlighting its patriotic credentials. It is a matter of time before two of the three members of the EPRDF, the Oromo Peoples’ Democratic Organization (OPDO) and the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM) desert them in their role as puppets. Both groups hold little real power, but simply have been personally rewarded for going along with the TPLF under the name of their ethnicity. The transparency of the close relationship between the Tigrayan identity and the Ethiopian state has made any pretensions of multinationalism increasingly difficult. One obvious such failure is amongst its major population because the OPDO/EPRDF’s ideological project in Oromia – to win recognition as the sole legitimate representative of Oromo’s interests and to make Oromos think of themselves as Ethiopians and citizens of the Ethiopia – has not been successful.

#### **Ethnic cleansing of Amhara and forced displacement of Indigenous people from their Ancestral lands.**

Population transfer as a method of gaining regional preponderance and ensuring the stability of the minority ethnic group is a deliberate activity so as to benefit from the resources of regions other than the Tigrayans’ original settlement. The net result of this is that “increased Tigrayan migration to participate in the region’s Sesaaam production continues to exacerbate ethnic tensions” (Tsega, 2017) Tigrayans flooded the territory, especially from the 1980s on, when the TPLF-led government reform program created new opportunities for migration and profit. Although they probably make up no more than 10 percent of the population, the Tigrayans are concentrated in Wolqayt’s cities and dominate the modern sectors of the economy. The close ties

between economics and demographics are illustrated here, as well as the fact that “many Wolqayts claim they are being pushed to the economic margins and overwhelmed by Tigre’s immigration.

In the next section, we will look at the economic implications of the securitization of the Tigrayans in these ethnic areas. Article 32 of the Ethiopian Constitution guarantees freedom of movement within the national territory. Ethiopia is also a signatory to several conventions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, which clearly state that a citizen has the right to work and live in any part of his or her country. However, since 2012, ethnic Amharas have been subjected to forcible eviction from Guraferda Bench-Maji in the Southern Regional State as well as from the Beni Shangul region of Western Ethiopia. Targeting Amharas, one of the largest ethnic groups in Ethiopia, for illegal deportation is a barbaric act that will have dire consequences for fostering ethnic harmony in Ethiopia. Stoking hatred will only serve to destabilize the country (Endalk, 2013).

Moreover, there is an ongoing hostility in the Amhara region. The government’s annexing of the Wolqayt communities to the Tigray administrative region has raised a serious question from its indigenous Wolqayt people who claim to be Amhara. Others should not be surprised at the failure of communities to accept the imposition of identities that do not correspond with how they view themselves and their surroundings. Favoring the minority ethnic group ensures a strong base of support, but discontented majorities have the possibility of taking asymmetrical means to destabilize key elements of the EPRDF rule and the Ethiopian economy. As we established, Wolqayt and Addis Ababa, especially, are areas which are vital for the EPRDF to retain control for geopolitical imperatives. The securitization of the Oromo and Amhara identities comes with its own set of problems as “the formulations of Tigrayan nationalism generally limit the extent and ways that non Tigrayan Ethiopian voices are recognized, and the EPRDF has problems in dealing with ethnic or nationality difference other than as a function of economic development” (Tsega, 2017)

### **The Addis Ababa ‘Master Plan’ and the ‘Ethiopian Somali Special Forces’ as a means of displacing the Oromos from their Ancestral lands.**

In April 2014, the government announced its readiness to implement what it called the "Addis Ababa Integrated Regional Development Plan" (the Master Plan for short), which proposed to annex most of the city's surrounding areas belonging to the National Regional State of Oromia. This provoked an immediate reaction from the public, but the government responded with brutal repression of the protests. Clashes are thought to have claimed 140 lives of students and farmers from the Oromia region. The announcement of the Master Plan led to another round of killing and arrests of the Oromo youth. Ethiopian jails were beefed up even more. Oromia was subjected to a continued state of terror. Ethiopia is fast becoming a concentration camp of Oromo people.

As many argue, Ethiopia’s tense ethnic federalism is being tested as it experiences the recent deadly clashes between ethnic Oromos and ethnic Somalis in the country’s dry and mainly pastoralist southeast. Local militia and police, including the controversial Somali Special Forces

known as the Liyu (for Amharic ‘special’) issued a proxy against the Oromo. There is no doubt that the Liyu force has full support of the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) government in Addis Ababa. The TPLF initially set up the Liyu police as a counter insurgency force against the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), a group fighting for self-determination for the Somali region. Importantly, these ethnic clashes arose during the time when there was ongoing protests in the Oromia and Amhara regions and while the two major ethnic groups showed their unity to resist the TPLF led ruling party. I argue that this was a deliberate political decision made by the TPLF, because without these new ethnic clashes at the Somali-Oromo border, the unrest would not have been erupted. Due to the silent response from the ruling government, one of the high-level OPDO officials, Abadula Gemedo (speaker of the House of People's Representatives), has resigned out of his own freewill.

### **Conclusion**

In this analysis, the securitization of the Oromo and Amhara identities contradict the existing literature where “elites favor certain groups in the allocation of state resources, oppress minorities viewed as hostile, create minority scapegoat groups during times of unrest and appoint members of the elite’s own ethnic group to positions of power” (Jackson, 2007, p. 206). However, there is a paradox in that a tiny minority in the ruling coalition has not only become a securitizing actor and referent object in the securitization process but also demands and monopolizes federalism for the last 25 years. In the Ethiopian context, the TPLF was inherently and structurally deficient in establishing a genuine accommodative federal political framework in the country. Hence, it has been embarking on sustaining a political travesty via EPRDF (Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Force) that would assure its hegemonic project by using ethnic rights as a discourse to attract and subdue the disoriented ethnic elites. As the Copenhagen school forecasted, securitization is not a positive tool of statecraft. “Security is what we make of it” (Booth, 1997, p. 93), and “what constitutes an existential threat is regarded as a subjective matter” (Emmers, 2007, p. 172), but in dealing with these subjective threats, we often ignore other threats and simultaneously create new ones.

To ensure the Tigray identity at the expense of others, “the state confronts powerful social forces with substantial coercive force, which in turn provokes violent resistance” (Jackson, 2007, p. 202). But securitizing an issue can make you vulnerable to the consequences of the exceptional actions you undertake, and something that has been bitterly experienced by those in Rwanda, where the traditional use of State violence in the exercise of power has created deep roots in history. It is this violence that facilitated Tutsi political domination over Hutu masses (Batware, 2012). The government intensively works in a divide rule system so as to polarize the two major ethnic groups unless and otherwise its ruling period might be at an end.

For decades, the ruling party has governed by pitting the Oromo and Amhara against one another. Now, the two groups are joining forces against the government; therefore, the Oromo-Amhara solidarity has become the greatest threat to the Ethiopian government. However, as much as the dominant elite TPLF utilized ethnicity to come this far and defend the present power

structure, the marginalized elites may use similar tools to resist domination by fomenting ethnic conflicts in which civil liberties and human rights, the essential elements of building civil society, will be the casualties. As Berhe (2008) strongly argued, ethnic mobilization can only play a positive role if it is based on establishing and institutionalizing civil liberties and human rights upon which diversities are accommodated and differences are mediated democratically. To the aforementioned, Bete Amhara is a typical and successful resistance movement in the Amhara region - witness the rise of Amhara Nationalism. The Copenhagen school advocates desecuritization and repoliticization as more sustainable methods of dealing with security issues in the political sphere.

I believe this securitization essay has shown the decidedly limited benefit of the Oromo's and Amhara's identity's securitization. This is due to the fact that securitization is succeeded only by acceptance from the audience so as to move the issue above the sphere of normal politics (Wæver, 1995). However, by observing the overall hostilities in the country, one can understand that Ethiopia's Tigray-dominated government may not be able to sustain its hold on power for much longer if the current nationwide uprising in Ethiopia against a minority tyranny continues without changing its views. Though it is not going to be attempted here, what can be suggested is that desecuritization of the Oromo and Amhara identities through power sharing can be used as a means of curing the current unrest and future political stability.

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**Sustainable Energy Transitions:  
Changing the ‘Business as Usual’ Trajectory in Sub-Saharan African Urban Areas**

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**Abstract**

This paper describes a novel approach to helping municipal authorities address the sustainable energy challenges associated with rapidly growing urban populations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Population in Africa is expected to double between 2010 and 2040, and substantial urban growth is expected in small and medium-sized cities where local government capacity constraints are most serious. A long-term partnership between municipal authorities, NGOs, and academics can build capacity, and a prescribed strategy can lead to progress on the ground. In order to contribute to future action, the paper argues for a greater role of local government in sustainable energy transitions, and presents some of the lessons learned from work in municipality-based energy work undertaken in South Africa over a 17-year period. It provides evidence of change, but more importantly, considers the process by which that change occurred and the intentional strategy of policy influence. Several South African cities engaged in this process with the assistance of the non-profit organization Sustainable Energy Africa have been able to move to greater renewable energy and energy efficiency implementation, and have strengthened their energy capacity and governance frameworks. The paper reviews the changing energy characteristics of South African cities, and describes the key processes that create a policy environment conducive to moving away from business as usual and responding to sustainable energy imperatives around clean energy and energy poverty. The use of energy modeling to support municipal energy strategy development is also described as an important informant for decision-makers regarding the consequences of decisions taken, or not taken, today. As such, it provides the groundwork for transferring the methodological process to other countries, while the latter part of the paper draws on recent experiences in Uganda and Ghana in replicating the work.

**The Energy Challenges of African Urbanization**

Population in Africa is expected to double between 2010 and 2040. The urban population proportion across sub-Saharan Africa is 38% (UN, 2014), but is growing steadily at 1.4% per year. Most urban development in Sub-Saharan Africa is occurring in a non-planned and non-transparent manner (African Research Institute, 2013), and well over half of urban dwellers live in slum conditions, which presents serious governance challenges. One of the noteworthy features of the

population growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is that it is expected to take place mostly in small and medium sized cities, rather than capitals (UN-Habitat, 2010). Yet this is where local government capacity is weakest, and there is little to suggest that urban governance capacity will improve significantly under ‘business as usual’ conditions, as reflected in a recent assessment of capacity in African local government: “few countries have developed strategies to cope with the challenges posed by rapid urbanization” (Cities Alliance & UCLGA, 2013, p. 10).

Energy is just one facet of sustainable urbanization, but a completely cross-cutting one, closely linked with welfare, economic health and environmental sustainability. However, as noted in the recent African Energy Outlook (IEA, 2014b), in spite of being resource-rich, access to modern energy in Sub-Saharan Africa remains low, the use of unsafe and unhealthy fuels is widespread, energy infrastructure is poorly developed, and the electricity supply is unreliable. While efforts to improve access to electricity are increasing, it is not keeping pace with population growth so the absolute number of people without a connection is rising. The often unreliable power systems have led to a proliferation of expensive back-up generators, and the ubiquitous reliance on solid biomass is putting forestry stocks under increasing pressure. The energy challenges in the region are therefore substantial, and there are roles for all levels of government in shaping a more sustainable future.

Over the past decades the understanding of a ‘sustainable energy transition’ has started to broaden from a focus on cleaner energy to include the democratization of energy. This involves a greater decentralization of energy systems, increased bottom-up decision-making, and a demand-driven planning focus, in contrast to the nationally centralized, supply-side planning common around the world before the 1990s (Goldthau, 2014; Reddy, 2002). A greater involvement of municipalities is a component of this trajectory, as reflected in the MDGs (Modi et al., 2006), where local government’s role is specifically noted, and the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All, 2014) initiative, where ‘bottom up’ solutions are considered important, amongst others is presented. The UN-Habitat notes, “Each region, nation, city and locality is different and sustainable innovations must be tailored to specificities that vary between localities and over time” (UN-Habitat, 2014, p. 7). This again suggests a stronger role for municipal government in energy transitions.

### **The Role of Municipalities in Sustainable Energy Transitions**

Although not yet acknowledged by many national governments, municipalities need to be stronger players in supporting the sustainable energy transition. Their core role around urban planning, transport planning, electricity distribution, and building plan approvals, amongst others, are important factors in energy transitions. Buildings consume 32% of the world’s energy (IEA, 2014a), and each inefficient building that is erected today commits its occupiers to upwards of 50 years of unnecessary energy consumption and associated high costs and emissions levels. Uncontrolled sprawling urban form results in cities that are likely to consume 30% or more transport fuels than denser cities (FFC, 2011). Municipalities are also significant consumers of energy in their operations, and operate landfill and wastewater treatment systems that can present



opportunities for clean energy generation. In addition, they can play a facilitative role for localized energy programs, such as the promotion of small-scale renewable energy systems (e.g. rooftop PV or biogas systems) and efficient cook stove initiatives (Kaza and Curtis, 2014). They are in close contact with their citizenry, including the growing urban poor population, and so are well placed to plan and respond more appropriately than national governments or other ‘external’ agents.

### **Sustainable Energy Transitions in Cities: The Case of South Africa**

The 18 urban areas covered by the recent State of Energy in South African Cities Report (SEA, 2015) are home to half of South Africa’s population, but occupy under 5% of the country’s land area. They account for over a third (37%) of the national energy consumption and nearly half (46%) of national electricity consumption. They also consume half (52%) of the country’s petrol and diesel. The city energy picture is thus crucial in moving the country along a sustainable energy trajectory. Yet, as with most local governments in developing countries, they are capacity constrained and struggle to provide the necessary services to their citizens, let alone give attention to issues which have longer-term consequences such as sustainable energy transitions. This is a dangerous situation, with the potential for a spiraling decline in welfare as the consequences of unsustainable practices steadily become the crises of the day.

Given the growing recognition of the role of local government in a sustainable future (ADB, 2011; Cities Alliance and UCLGA, 2013; & UN-Habitat, 2014;), support for this level of government has started to increase over the past years, with organizations such as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) having a growing sustainable energy focus. The following sections describe a municipal support program run by the non-profit organization Sustainable Energy Africa since 1998 – the longest-standing of such support initiatives in South Africa. When this work started, cities were generally not regarded as players in the energy sector, and were not considered in most national energy policy or strategy discussions. Today, this has changed. Due in no small part to such support programs, cities are now regarded as central agents to a sustainable energy future for the country. For example, local governments now are instrumental in key national policies such as the National Climate Response White Paper and the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan, and have a recognized role in national electricity planning documents.

### **Agents of Change: An Applied Methodology for Facilitating Energy Transition at the Local Government Level.**

The capacity shortfall of local government to tackle the challenges posed by sustainable energy imperatives are significant, and are likely to remain so into the long-term under current conditions, as noted earlier. Given this situation, there is a clear need for external capacity support, and recently international organizations have begun to respond to this need, as discussed above. However, efforts to support municipalities with sustainable energy initiatives are too often ineffective. A fundamental reason for this is because many such initiatives, often conceptualized by *outsiders*, lack a detailed grasp of the complex internal operations and dynamics of

municipalities and do not appreciate the severe constraints they operate under. Often, approaches to this issue are derived from experiences in northern cities, where capacity – human and financial – is far less of a challenge, mandates and priorities are significantly different, and there is substantially less political interference and manipulation than at the local level (Bawakyillenuo et al., 2015).

Sustainable Energy Africa has worked as a support organization for municipal authorities in South Africa over a 17-year period to promote sustainable energy. Over this time, they have developed a structured method of working with local government to support sustainable energy transitions. This methodology can be applicable to any organization in the role of change agent to this government sector, and is now being used in other African countries as indicated in the SAMSET (2013) project. The methodology is described in detail elsewhere (Bawakyillenuo et al., 2015), but in summary, there are two key elements involved: one is the presence of an intermediary organization and the other is the structured workstream.

### **Role of the Intermediary.**

Key to the approach is the involvement of a local intermediary organization, which can fulfill a number of functions:

- Links several municipalities together in a partnership arrangement;
- Facilitates the development of a Sustainable Energy Strategy by municipal authorities;
- Coordinates local government inputs to relevant national activities;
- Identifies barriers and constraints to the successful implementation of projects;
- Provides a certain amount of expertise and research capability, but more importantly, has the contacts to be able to source specialist expertise as needed;
- Acts as a knowledge intermediary, making technical information accessible to partners;
- Promotes learning and capacity building of municipal partners, for example by running suitable workshops and courses.

The intermediary should be an established, respected institution that deals with urbanization and/or energy and has a grounding in applied research. Candidates include universities, NGOs, and professional associations. However, the complexion of the intermediary organization is important; for example, local government associations tend to be too political, and some university locations may be too academic.

### **Structured Workstream.**

A structured program of the following activities is designed to identify priority issues, develop a strategy to address these, and act on the strategy:

1. **Developing a State of Energy Report** on each municipality – examine the energy supply and demand (domestic, commercial, industrial, transport, and government), including energy access and poverty, and environmental implications of energy use.
2. **Undertaking primary research** to fill information gaps evident from the State of Energy assessments.

3. **Modeling energy's future** using a simple energy modelling package, or even a spreadsheet. Considering energy use in the future based on, for example, population and economic growth trends can help decision makers identify forthcoming problems, and plan accordingly (discussed more later).
4. **Developing a Sustainable Energy Strategy** evolving from the previous activities that identifies areas to be pursued, and assigns responsibilities and timeframes.
5. **Implementation** support so the intermediary organization supports the process by facilitating, sourcing technical support, and communicating technical information to partners. This is arguably the most critical area of work of the program.

The structured workstream described above, and the work of the intermediary organization in particular, all serve to strengthen the capacity of municipal partners. Formal capacity building activities have also been found to be effective:

- Networking events - municipalities share lessons from implementation of particular projects.
- Week long 'Masters Level' courses – relevant not only to municipalities but also to academics, consultants, NGOs, and development workers.

Networking not only facilitates lessons sharing, but builds relationships between municipalities and enables the development of common positions resulting in a stronger voice to national government.

### **The Changing (or not) Energy Characteristics of South African Cities**

Given the multiple factors that are inevitably at play in an ever-changing energy sector, what has the impact of such a dedicated local government support program been? The recent State of Energy in South African Cities 2015 report provides an overview of the changes that are taking place across the top cities in the country. Together with a range of other research reports, the emerging picture is one of significant local government energy governance shifts, substantial implementation in some sectors, and little movement, even deterioration, in others.

#### **The Energy Picture.**

South African cities are characterized by high transport fuel energy consumption, partly associated with sprawling cities with poor public transport. Electricity is the second largest energy source (Figure 1) supplying the residential, commercial, and much of the industrial energy needs. Depending on the industrial sector characteristics of a city, there may be significant coal or heavy furnace oil consumption in the energy profile. Electricity is accountable for the majority of global warming emissions due to the carbon-intensive nature of national electricity generation, which is mainly coal-based. Largely because of such electricity consumption but also because of their high transport energy use, South African cities are amongst the more carbon-intensive globally (SEA, 2015).

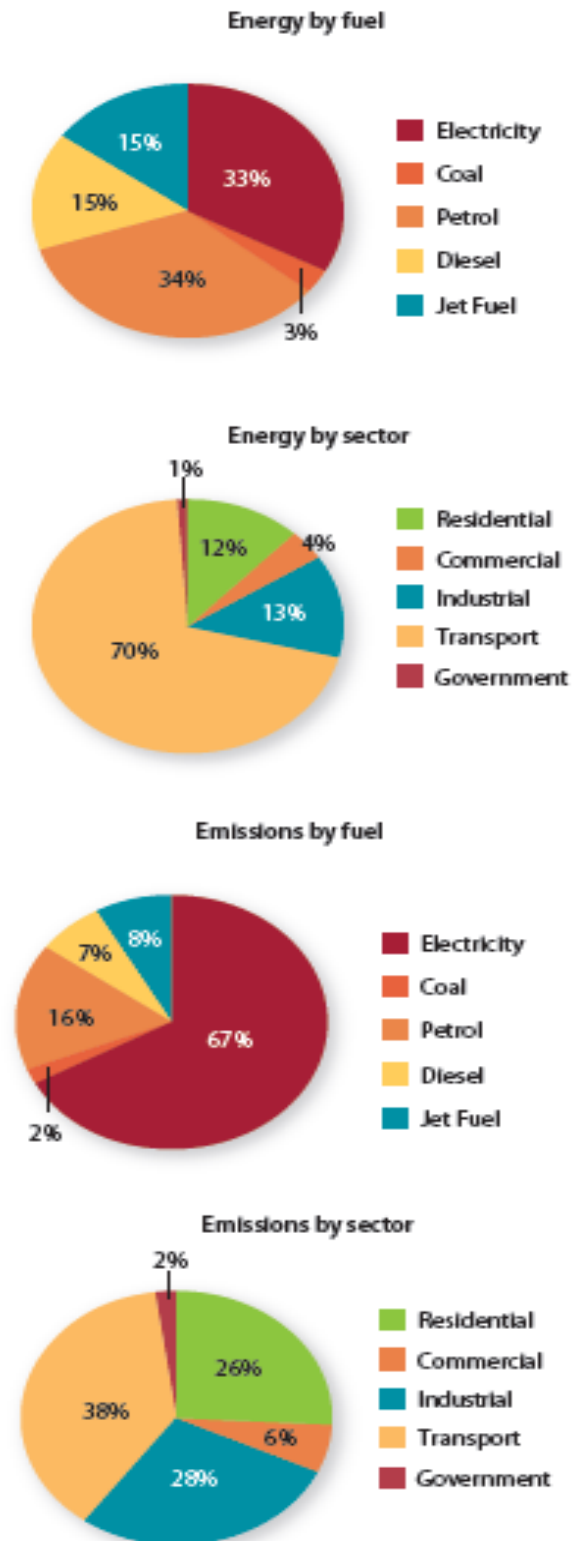
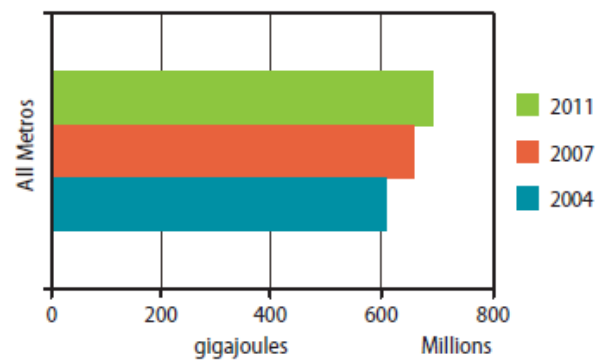


Figure 1: Typical metro energy use and carbon emissions (SEA 2015)

### Key Urban Energy Trends.

Overall, energy use in South African cities has increased over the past decade, as expected in a developing country with a growing population and economy. This is substantially driven by transport fuel increases, since absolute electricity consumption has declined since 2007 (Figure 2 and 3) due to steep electricity price increases and to some extent the global recession. The economy in many urban areas is becoming less energy intensive, partly because some cities are showing a small shift away from manufacturing and industrial sectors towards the less energy-intensive financial and services sectors, but the decoupling is also thought to be a response to electricity price increases. This reduction in energy intensity is a positive trend, as the national economy has been notoriously energy intensive due to historically low electricity prices.

Significant progress has been made with electricity efficiency since 2007, both in the private sector as well as in municipal operations. Although this trend has been accelerated by the electricity price increases, the focus on efficiency strategies and action plans, awareness raising campaigns, private sector energy efficiency forums and pilot projects that preceded the price hikes is likely to have enabled a more effective response to the situation. Within municipalities, efficiency improvements in traffic lights, street lights and buildings has been significant, supported by a National Treasury Energy Efficiency and Demand-Side Management (EEDSM) grant, and this has precipitated the institutionalizing of electricity efficiency in local government operations in several cities. Another significant development in the field of energy efficiency is the finalization of national building regulations that specify minimum efficiency standards for all new buildings (SABS, 2011), although they are not yet being widely applied mainly due to capacity constraints amongst municipal staff. However, in spite of these positive steps, there still remain significant unexploited energy efficiency opportunities, as reflected in the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (DoE, 2013) as well as a recent assessment of efficiency opportunities in municipal operations (SACN, 2014). Amongst these is lack of ceilings in the majority of the approximately 3 million government subsidized low income households, resulting in poor indoor comfort levels and higher space heating energy expenditures in winter.



*Note: excludes aviation and marine fuels*

Figure 2: Energy consumption over time in South African metros (SEA 2015)

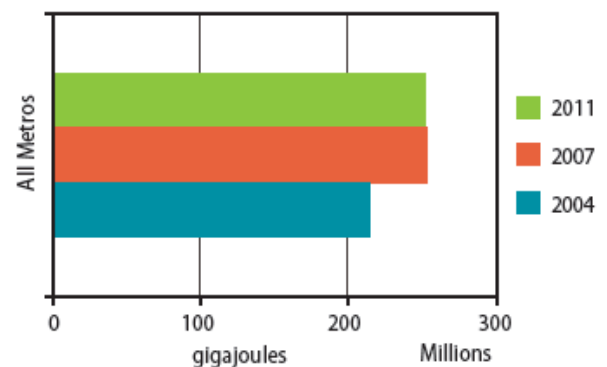


Figure 3: Electricity consumption over time in South African metros, showing the decrease after 2007 (SEA 2015)

The renewable energy profile of cities is improving (Figure 4) with several methane from landfill gas projects completed or underway and one significant wind generation project in place. In addition, sewage methane is being explored and rooftop solar PV embedded generation installation numbers are accelerating. Many municipalities have developed, or are in the process of developing, regulatory and procedural guidelines to accommodate this increased interest in embedded generation, as it is becoming ever more popular in light of consistently steep conventional power price increases and renewable energy technology price decreases. Total amounts of renewable generation, however, are still very small in relation to city purchases from the national power grid – less than 0.3% of the total (SEA, 2015).

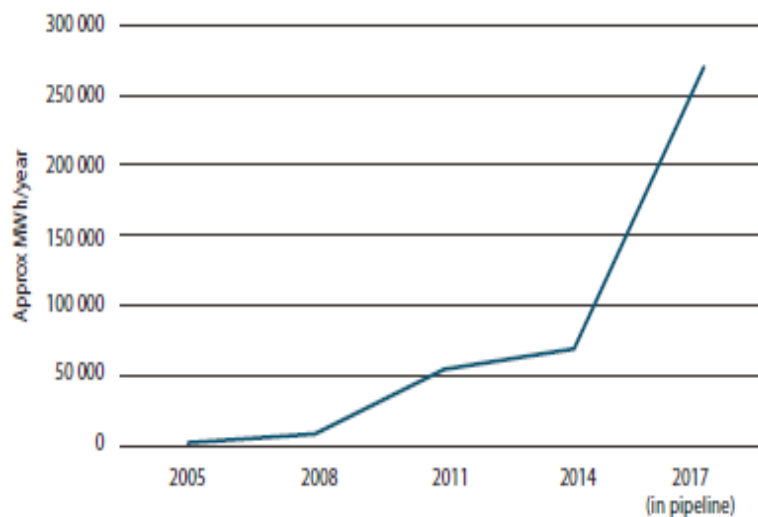


Figure 4: Municipal (led or assisted) renewable energy capacity (SEA 2015)

Access to electricity in South African cities is generally close to the national targets of 97% access by 2025, with 10 of the top 18 cities having connection rates of 90% or above, and only one being below 80% electrified (SEA, 2015). Several cities have programs to electrify informal settlements, often using innovative approaches and appropriate technologies to move into this previously marginalized sector (Gaunt et al., 2012).

Overall, carbon emissions from cities are decreasing per capita in terms of GVA despite increases nationally (Figure 5). This has to do with the shifting nature of industries in urban areas, but also the recent decrease in total electricity use. To a lesser extent renewable and other sustainable energy interventions have contributed to this trend (SEA, 2015).

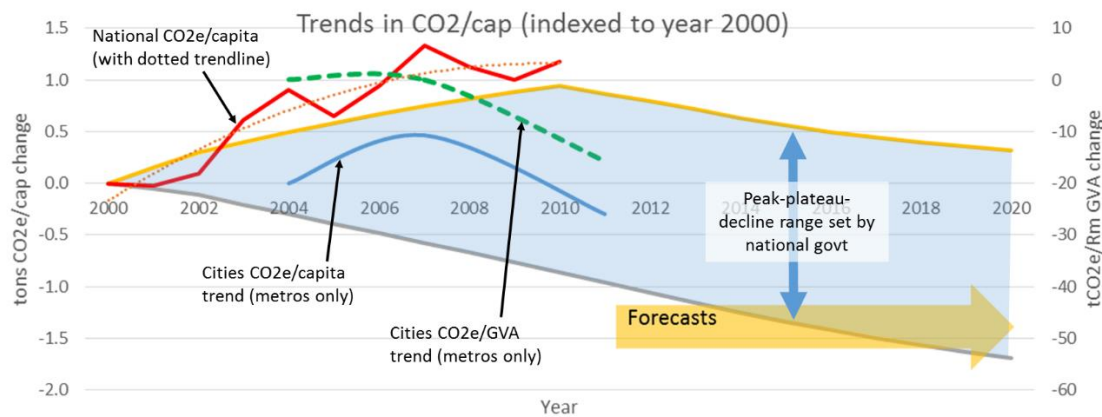


Figure 5: Metro carbon emissions trends compared with national (SEA 2015)

In the urban transport sector, there has been limited progress however. In spite of the Gautrain rapid rail project and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects being implemented in several cities, the characteristic of urban transport is moving increasingly towards greater private vehicle dominance, worse congestion, greater real household expenditure on mobility, and longer commute times (DoT, 2013, DoT, 2014). Sustainable transport efforts are only likely to gain traction within a supportive spatial planning framework, however, and unfortunately, the development of South African cities has largely reinforced the apartheid spatial form of sprawling, low-density urban spaces, with the poor often in far-flung settlements, resulting in inefficient and expensive transport systems and reduced access to urban amenities by many households (CGTA, 2014). While a few urban areas have progressive spatial development frameworks or regulations, urban form changes slowly, so even in these instances, it is not yet conducive to significant shifts towards sustainable transport.

The State of South African Cities Report (SEA, 2015) indicates that urban energy-related governance has made substantial progress over the past decade, with seventeen metros and secondary cities developing sustainable energy strategies by 2011 from the first one in 2002 (SEA, 2013), and dedicated sustainable energy management capacity increasing exponentially. (In 2015, there were over 35 dedicated staff dealing with sustainable energy matters in four leading metros, which is an increase from zero in 2000.) In addition, the availability and collection of local-level data to enable planning and track progress has improved markedly since 2000, prompted by multiple data collection exercises (SEA, 2006; SEA, 2011; & SEA 2015). An overarching local government sustainable energy strategy has been developed by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA, 2014), and the engagement of many municipalities with substantial renewable energy and energy efficiency projects indicates a departure from business as usual practice. However, without external support, the fact remains that most municipalities struggle to attend to sustainability projects that have longer-term benefits because of the pressing demands of day-to-day service delivery.

## **Evidence of Impact from the Support Program**

Urban change is driven by multiple factors, including energy prices, technology developments and prices, global warming pressures, national and local policy shifts, local political interference, resource discoveries, and economic performance and structural changes. In addition, in the past years, there have been several players active within the local government energy sector, partly linked to the increasing recognition of their crucial role in a sustainable energy transition and a resulting inflow of funding in this direction. It is therefore not easy to isolate the impact of any one support program such as the initiative described earlier, albeit a longstanding and extensive program. An independent review was undertaken in 2014 to this end which drew on interviews with stakeholders as well as a review of tangible projects linked to the program. In brief, the support given by the program was described as having a clear role in the following:

- initiating the development of nation-wide city energy data,
- facilitating energy efficiency programs in different sectors in several municipalities,
- promoting renewable energy (often rooftop solar PV) in several major cities,
- bringing local government perspectives to a range of key national policies and strategies,
- bringing energy and climate change issues into spatial planning for the first time, and
- institutionalizing sustainable energy and climate change issues within municipalities (CDRA, 2015).

In six metros, the institutionalizing of sustainable energy has progressed significantly with energy strategies being developed and staff compliments expanded significantly. Tangible change has been evident, because of a range of factors, of which the above support is seen by stakeholders as being amongst the significant ones. The support program facilitated a sharing of experience with successful projects through research support, inter-municipal exchanges, site visits and making technical expertise available. Implementation of the following has accelerated as a result:

- Installation of renewable energy capacity including electricity from landfill gas and waste water gas, rooftop solar PV, biowaste and wind electricity;
- Energy efficiency measures including street lighting, traffic lighting, and buildings efficiency.

Municipalities are generally conservative by nature and follow more readily than lead, so effort invested in supporting the first municipalities generally has a multiplier effect, especially when successes are shared via facilitated learning exchange events.

## **Making a Support Program Work in Practice**

The experience from the last 17 years of working with municipalities has given insight into a number of important principles for local government support programs. The approach needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the following key operating principles:

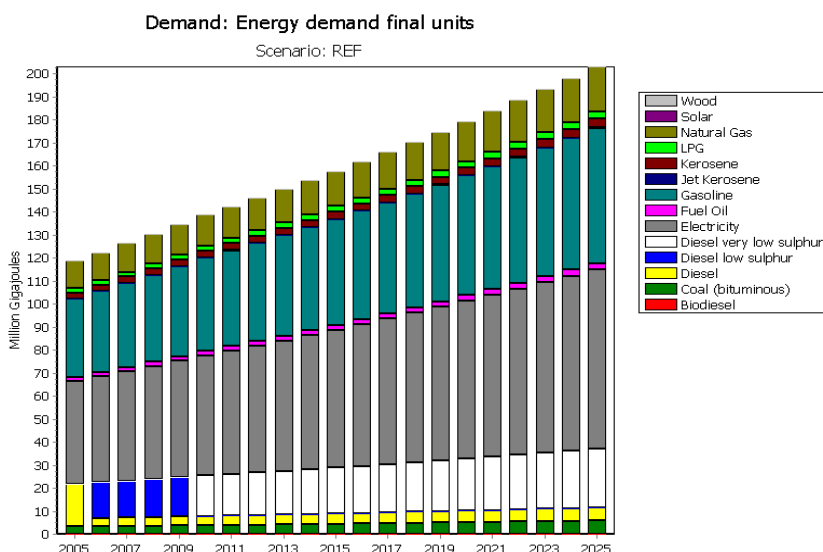
- Because municipalities are by nature conservative, it is most effective to work primarily with proactive partner municipalities, from which lessons can radiate to others. Selected partner municipalities should be fast growing, have senior-level buy-in to the program, and above all, they should be enthusiastic to participate.



- ‘Outsiders’ cannot easily grasp the detailed inner dynamics of municipalities, which are very often bureaucratically complicated as well as being subject to idiosyncrasies associated with politics and power. It is, therefore, essential that the sustainable energy strategy is led by the municipalities with the intermediary organization fulfilling facilitation and support roles.
- It is important to make sure that the programs focused on are compatible with political interests and strategic priorities; it may be appropriate to focus on specific sectors where there is the most interest and alignment with municipal goals.
- Success depends on goodwill within the municipalities, so the program should support the interests of key staff, even if this may not address highest priority energy issues, especially at the early stages of working with municipalities. Once the benefits of the program are appreciated, focus can shift more towards energy priorities.
- It is worth linking with the ‘champions’ within a municipality who are keen to see change. Because change requires effort, little happens without people who have a specific motivation and vision in this area.

It is important to emphasize that this is a long-term approach. In the absence of any clear revenue streams, the support program will require external funding. Few local governments in South Africa or Africa are likely to have the capacity, even in the long-term, to give adequate attention to future sustainability concerns in the face of the more immediate service backlogs and other urgent pressures. Supporting the capacity of local government can be funded by national governments but comes with a risk of bringing national political interests to bear, which may not be in the best interest of local government. Funding from development support donors is thus more appropriate.

## Energy Futures Modeling to Support Municipal Prioritization and Planning



Although just one of a suite of support activities, energy futures modeling has played a significant role in the support of South African cities. As part of their energy strategy development process, full-system energy modeling has been undertaken in five cities - Thekwini, Ekurhuleni, Cape Town, Buffalo City and Polokwane. A province-level model has been developed for Gauteng, and

partial models have been developed in several other cities. Modeling the future has been found to be an important motivator for change. If decision-makers can see the future impact of decisions taken, or not taken, today, they are more likely to be proactive in this regard.

The accuracy of such modeling exercises is reliant on adequate data. While local-level data is improving, it is still far from comprehensive or reliable (SEA, 2015). However, a decade of experience with modeling (Winkler et al., 2005) shows that, even with substantially less-than-complete data sets, it is a worthwhile exercise, because for strategy development purposes in a municipality, a high degree of accuracy is not important. It is enough to demonstrate the broad implications of current trajectories and different intervention choices. The futures modeling is based on a ‘business-as-usual’ scenario, which is generally taken to be an expected future should current trends continue (See Figure 6 as an example.). Different municipalities will customize alternative, more sustainable scenarios based on existing policy frameworks and emerging priority issues. For example, if decision-makers can see the cost of a future ‘business as usual’ energy profile (e.g. Figure 7) and the potential cost savings of a different trajectory (e.g. Figure 9), they are more motivated to change the trajectory. In addition, the modeling can show which interventions are most critical to effect such change (Figure 8). Municipal officials are thus equipped with facts and figures to help argue the case for change and negotiate the inevitable political and bureaucratic inertia.

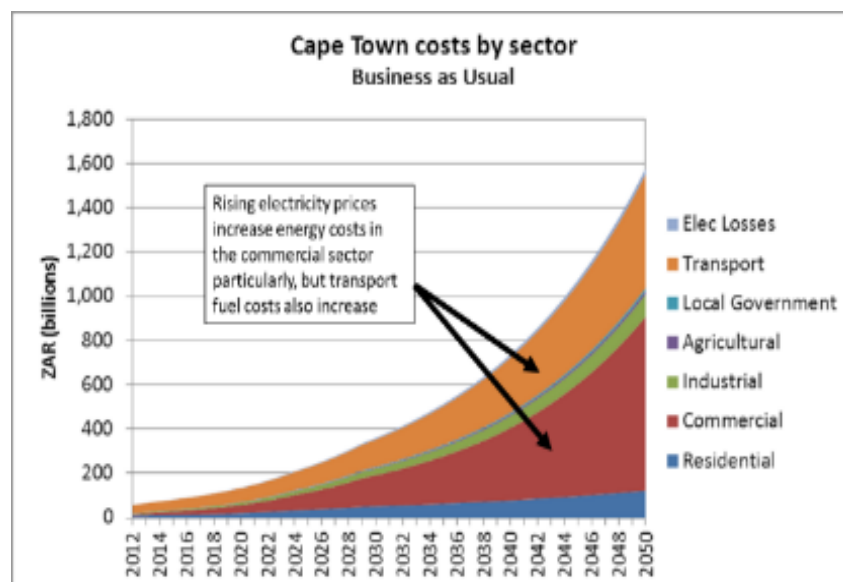


Figure 7: With energy cost increases and high growth, the city may face an expensive energy future (Cape Town)

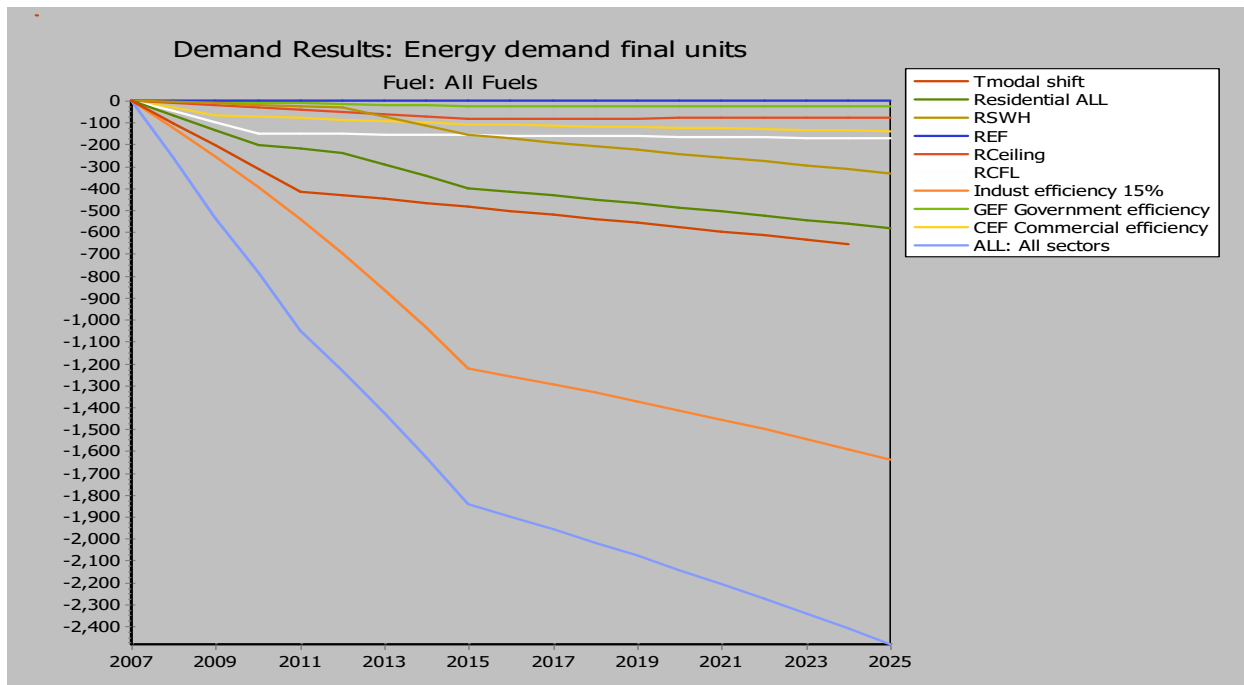


Figure 8: Energy saving impacts of different sustainable energy efficiency interventions (Buffalo City)

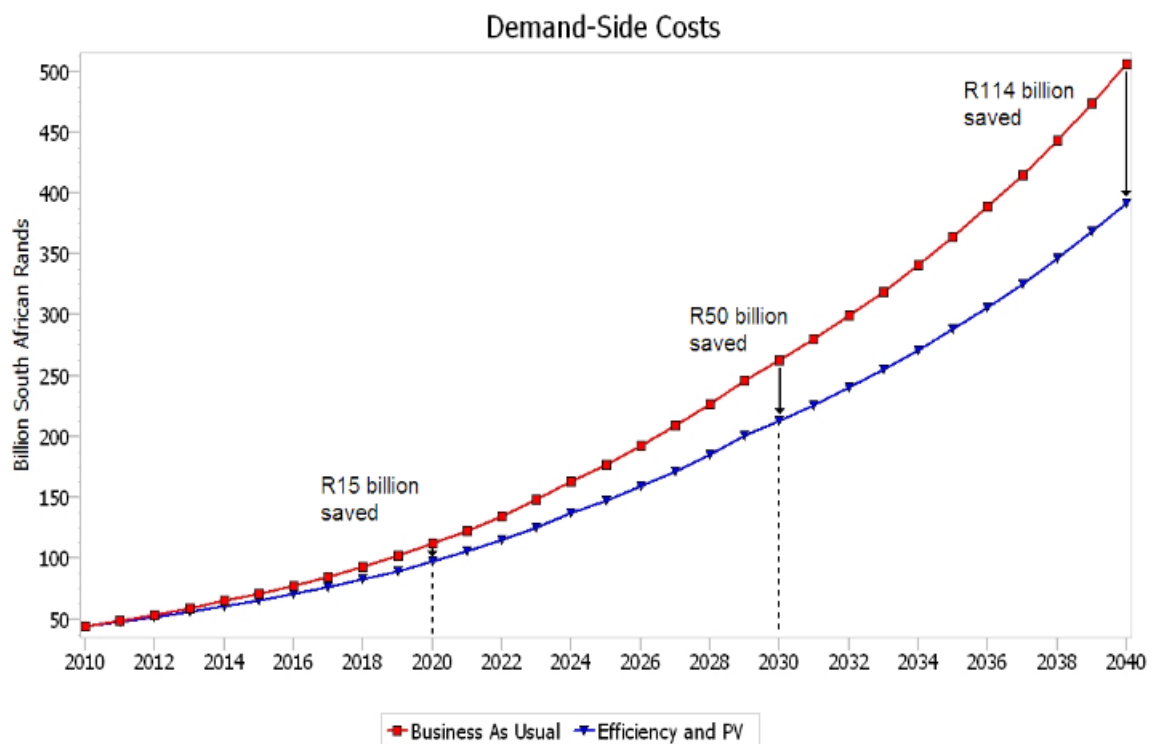


Figure 9: Modeled cost savings from efficiency and renewable interventions (eThekweni)

The modeling can also explore what is required to move a city's carbon profile to one in keeping with national or global mitigation ambitions. In South Africa's case this is the peak-plateau-decline trajectory defined in the National Climate Change Response White Paper (DEA, 2011). Through such an exercise, it is common to find that, even with a very ambitious set of efficiency and renewable energy interventions, the carbon trajectory can only temporarily accord with these ambitions (Figure 10), and in the decades to come, will start to depart from acceptable levels unless more fundamental and hitherto undefined shifts in the energy sector emerge. The difficulty of achieving a stable, declining carbon trajectory in the long-term is a concern the world over, one which is mirrored in South African cities.

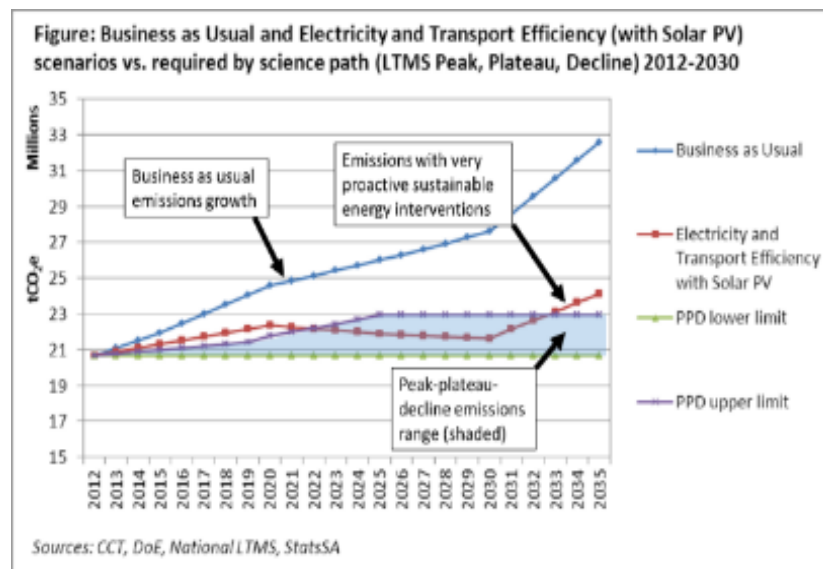


Figure 10: Even with significant sustainable energy implementation, emissions rise above acceptable levels after about 2035 (Cape Town)

Although energy futures modeling is an important part of strategy development and the local government support process, it must be seen as just one component of a general support framework, and should be adequately embedded in such a process if it is to be of use. Elements of the support program design mentioned earlier, including capacity building, participatory strategy development and a strong implementation support component, are essential if change is to take place.

### Supporting Sub-Saharan African Cities with Sustainable Energy

Urbanization rates in Africa are amongst the highest in the world, and, as with South Africa, the municipal capacity to undertake even minimum levels of urban planning and basic service delivery is severely inadequate. This is acknowledged by institutions such as the African Development Bank (ADB, 2011), UN-Habitat (2014) and Cities Alliance (Cities Alliance & UCLGA, 2013); all of whom have noted the need for bolstering local government mandates, capacity and resources. This includes the municipal role in sustainable energy transitions given the

central role energy plays in welfare improvements and economic health, as well as its environmental impact. In many African countries, the capacity challenges are even greater than those faced by South African municipalities.

In general, although few outside of South Africa are electricity distributors, local governments across Sub-Saharan Africa have strong roles in spatial and transport planning and building plan approval. They also often manage solid and liquid waste streams, with associated renewable energy opportunities. All of these have important direct links with sustainable energy.

Drawing on the experience in South Africa, the SAMSET project (SAMSET, 2013) has been working with selected Sub-Saharan African municipalities at a detailed level since 2013. The project is a partnership with universities and development organizations in Africa and the UK, and six municipalities in Uganda, Ghana and South Africa. The project has identified intermediary support organizations in each African country – one at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research at the University of Ghana, and one in the Faculty of the Built Environment at the Uganda Martyrs University, in addition to Sustainable Energy Africa in South Africa. The project is building the capacity of these organizations through their engagement with the structured workstream described earlier, and they are in turn supporting local partner municipalities with energy issues of relevance.

A central component of the project is to research and improve the knowledge exchange process (Marvin & Silver, 2014), both amongst the project partners as feedback to improve activity effectiveness, as well as more generally between local government and support organization players – those aiming to be change agents to this sphere of government. Given the current frequent misalignment of development support initiatives and local government needs discussed earlier, the knowledge exchange framework being developed is seen as a core contribution to such development support in Africa.

The municipal support work of SAMSET is in its early stages still and therefore impacts and lessons are not yet apparent. To date, ‘state of energy’ surveys have been undertaken to establish the problems and opportunities within municipalities, relationships with municipalities have been formalized, capacity building events have been held, and coordination with key stakeholders pursued. Energy futures modeling is in advanced stages and strategy development work has started. The inter-municipal knowledge exchange events that have taken place to date have revealed numerous transferrable learnings between the countries. This collaboration will guide the full process of systemic change with the municipalities over the coming years, and the longer-term plan is to roll out the approach and for the current intermediary support organizations in each country, to capacitate further intermediary organizations in other African countries.

### **Conclusion**

Given the rate of urbanization in Sub-Saharan Africa and the lack of capacity in most governments to respond to the expanding service delivery needs, the region may be facing a crisis of global proportion. In Africa, there is a call for at least a partial localization of solutions. In addition, there is a growing recognition of the potentially important role of municipalities in

addressing the many challenges facing urban areas, including those associated with sustainable energy transitions. This, coupled with the severe capacity shortages in municipalities, point to an important focus for development support. The program described herein has had a positive impact on the trajectory of South African urban areas and can make a contribution in bolstering municipal abilities throughout Sub-Saharan Africa to respond to these challenges. It seems appropriate that such approaches are given greater attention by development support institutions globally.

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# **The Impact of Motivation on Employee Performance in Selected Insurance Companies in Nigeria**

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## **Abstract**

Motivation refers to a complexity of forces that inspires a person at work to intensify his desire and willingness to use his potentialities to perform in order to achieve organizational goals or objectives. This study investigates the relationship between motivation and the level of employee performance as applied to some selected insurance companies in Lagos. The study has three main objectives: to evaluate the effects of motivation on employee performance in some selected insurance companies, to assess motivational factors that can influence employee performance, and to recommend possible policies and innovations for better performance of the employees and increased profitability. Structured Questionnaire was used as the instrument for the research work. This instrument was tested for reliability and validity of its content. The results of the tests were certified by experts. The study used stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques in selecting the respondents. A sample of 100 respondents which included management, senior and junior staff members, of the selected insurance company was used for the primary data. Simple percentages, distribution tables and pie chart statistical tools were used to analyse the primary data while Chi-Square ( $X^2$ ) was applied to test the only hypothesis formulated for the study at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that motivation was the major factor that affected employee performance. Furthermore, the study showed a direct strong and positive relationship between motivation of employees and their performance. This study hereby recommends that the management teams in organizations should always carry out a thorough study on the various motivational tools that can appeal and motivate their employees. Such motivational tools can include: involvement of employees in decision making, rotation of employees, provision of fringe benefits, payment of bonuses to workers, and promotion of deserved staff to higher positions of authority.

*Keywords: motivation, employee performance, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.*

## **Introduction**

Motivation can be defined as the complexity of forces that inspires a person at work to intensify his desires and willingness to use his potential to perform in order to achieve organizational objectives. According to Mile (2004), motivation is a condition which influences the arousal, direction and maintenance of behavior. Human needs must be satisfied, and this can cause the arousal of motivational forces. Koontz et al. (1990) opined that motivation of employees is an important inner control tool and should be satisfied in order to attain advantages such as increased employee commitment, increased productivity and efficiency. Motivation emphasizes

result-oriented management through the setting of smart goals and effective communication systems in an organization.

According to Koontz et al. (1990), employee performance refers to the efficiency and effectiveness of employees in achieving organizational goals and objectives. They further stated that employee performance could be evaluated by considering the level of absenteeism, quality of reports, and the time of reporting for and leaving duty.

### **Statement of Problem**

Towers, (2003) emphasized in his book titled, *Working Today: Understanding What Drives Employee Engagement*, quoted by Adelanwa (2013), that employee motivation was the biggest driver of organizational performance. He further stated that an organization that was able to motivate its employees and maintain it would be able to leverage their zeal and drive in order to ensure staff performance.

This study is therefore aimed at evaluating the impact of motivation on the employees and the level of their performance.

### **Research Questions**

1. Is there any relationship between motivation and employee performance?
2. Is it necessary to motivate employees before they can perform?
3. Should motivation of employees be limited to salary and allowances?

### **Objectives of the Study**

This research study will evaluate the motivational factors that can influence employee performance, assess effects of motivation on employee performance, and recommend possible motivational policies and innovations for increasing the level of performance of the employees. The independent variable in this study is performance while the dependent variable is motivation. Motivation will be discussed using the following variables: salaries and wages, ICT training, fringe benefits (e.g. house rent allowance, leave bonus, transportation allowance, luncheon vouchers), staff training, provision for staff self-development benefits, length of service award to deserved staff, along with others.

### **Research Hypothesis**

1. There is no strong relationship between employee performance and motivation.
2. It is not necessary to motivate employees before they perform.
3. Motivation of employees should not be limited to salaries and allowances.

### **Scope of Study**

The study focuses on the impact of motivation on employee performance and the relationship between motivation and employee performance.

## **Significance of the Study**

The research will be of great importance to various organizations and groups of employers of labor in assisting them in knowing different forms of motivation for better performance.

## **Literature Review**

There are competitive environments among the various businesses and organizations. Therefore, all employers of labor try to manage their overhead costs in order to retain their key employees through motivation. The relationship between motivation and employee performance is that employees tend to perform much better when they are positively and consistently motivated. However, the employees perform less when they are poorly motivated. Therefore, motivation is directly proportional to the performance of employees. Kreitner (1989) and Higgins (1994) in their respective comments asserted that motivation is the psychological process that gives behavior, purpose, direction and an internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need. Adelanwa (2013) referenced Deci, Ryan and Roberts by saying,

Traditionally, motivation has been defined by the two dimensions that comprise it, namely: energy and direction. The energy dimension of motivation is the driving force behind someone's efforts and persistence during engagement in a particular activity. Direction of motivation determines the area or field of interest in which that effort is projected. Both energy and direction are necessary elements of a complete motivational act. Energy without a direction has no purpose, and direction without energy results in a state of no motivation. (p. 56)

Different scholars have agreed and disagreed on the ways employees should be motivated. Some of them assert that in order to motivate an individual, a financial reward is necessary by the motivator whereas others believe that money is not a true motivator hence both financial and non-financial incentives are required. According to Cole (1998), financial incentives are rewards that employees receive in consideration of their contribution towards the organization. Lindner (1998) noted that monetary methods of motivation have little value, even though many firms still use money as a major incentive. She adds that wages are normally paid per hours worked and workers receive money at the end of the week, and overtime is paid for any additional hours worked, whereas salaries are based on a year's work and are paid at the end of each month. Chien-Chung (2003) said, "Piece rate is the paying of a worker per item produced in a certain period of time." He asserted that this incentive increased speed of work and therefore, productivity. This was in agreement with the earlier revelations made by Taylor (1911) who noted that the employees considered piece rate as a practice of motivation. Doellgast (2006) believed that fringe benefits are often known as "perks" and are items which an employee receives in addition to their normal wage and salary. These include: company cars, health insurance, free meals, education, and so on. He asserts that these encourage loyalty to the company, and as such, employees may stay longer with the company. Another believer of this school of thought includes Likert (2004).

An additional school of thought believes that non-financial incentives are the most important motivators of human behavior in terms of the needs of human beings. These researchers

believe that non-financial incentives such as training opportunities, job rotation and communication styles are excellent motivators. The believers of this school of thought include Herzberg (2000) and Fowler (2001). However, Clifton (2000) disagreed with the view that job rotation does not actually lead to the motivation of employees. This practice only helps the employees not get bored with their work but does not maintain a certain level of motivation in employees.

A third school of thought believes that employee performance can be increased through the provision of non-financial incentives such as goal clarity, knowledge of structures and feedback. Believers in this school of thought are Knights and Willmott (2007), Peterson and Luthans (2006), Rynes, Gerhart, Minette, and Edwards (2004) along with Taylor (1911).

Another school of thought believes that performance might not occur if the environmental conditions are so unsuitable as to present insurmountable barriers to performance (Rynes et al., 2004). These environmental conditions, they believe, include technology, training and experience, abilities, and work-home balance. Technology, according to Samuel (2010), is a primary tool that can be used to boost employee performance. Improvement in technology accompanied by training of the employees can significantly increase their level of performance because it reduces the stress that comes with doing the job manually. Scott (2000) defined ability as the capacity to learn and perform the tasks required. He revealed that a good mixture of ability, training and experience is the root cause of the best performance. He asserted that the best performing employees have at least, two of the three factors. In addition, Berman (2001) wrote that as much as an employer might not want to be affected by the personal life of his employees, personal problems can sometimes affect employee performance. Managers need to be more sensitive to employee personal problems and be prepared to discuss the issues with the employees when necessary. If an employee requires time off to deal with a personal problem, Berman continued, then granting that time off would help to show all other employees that the company values its employees. In all, motivation that leads to productivity can be complicated.

### **Challenges of Motivation**

Some of the challenges facing the application of motivation in organizations include corporate culture, communication style, organization direction, decision making, and feedback mechanism (Deci, 1975).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research study is based on the following motivational theories:

#### **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943)**

Abraham Maslow in 1943 published a theory on what motivates human beings in his paper titled, "A Theory of Human Motivation." In it, Maslow said that human beings had five levels of needs that they always sought to meet. The more the needs are basic for life, the more motivated a person is to fulfil them. However, they would experience more stress if they failed or were unable

to fulfil them. The five levels of need are: physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness needs, ego-status needs and self-actualization needs.

### **Expectancy Theory of Motivation**

This theory tries to explain and predict motivated behavior. It attempts to answer the question: What determines a person's readiness for motivated behavior? The theory draws on thoughts from rational science, which includes human behavior as being controlled by a desire for maximum use of a given behavior. The following formula can be used to explain the theory (Atkinson, 1964).

Motivation = Expectancy x Instrumentality x Valence (E x I x V) where:

E = Expectancy, or "the relevant employee's expectations that his performance leads to the desired result, i.e. that the performance will be successful (Laegaard & Bindslev, 2006, p. 46)."

I = Instrumentality, or "the personal assessment of the probability of different rewards as a consequence of successful task performance. Some rewards will in all probability occur while others have significantly smaller or very poor probability (Laegaard & Bindslev)."

V = Valence, or "the value attached to these rewards by the employee concerned. Examples of rewards are promotion, higher pay (increase in salary), time off, over-time pay, credit, and so on. The factor V is the personal value of possible rewards and is often called Valence (Laegaard & Bindslev)."

### **Management by Objectives (MBO)**

This theory relies on the idea that "most human behavior depends on unconscious choices related to objectives and intentions" (Laegaard & Bindsley, 2006, p. 48). All actions have a direction and a desired result. Techniques for objective setting include the practical use of several motivational theories, or of which the Expectancy Theory is a primary influence. The belief is that the objectives and the process of objectives setting have positive influence on motivation that can lead to better performance. Objectives, or goals, must be SMART. That is S = Specific, M = Measurable, A = Ambitious and Attractive, R = Realistic, T = Time related (Laegaard & Bindslev).

### **McClelland's Motivational Theory (1971)**

David McClelland's Theory begins with the management group, and he "focuses on three meaningful needs which he believes are culturally acquired and therefore, possible to change through training. He does not deal with progression and regression between needs but with the needs/motives that have significant influence on productivity and efficiency in work life. McClelland's needs, which are often called APA needs, include:

1. **Achievement Needs:** This is the need to achieve high performance and to master difficult and complex tasks.
2. **Power Needs:** This is a need to take responsibility, take charge, gain influence, and the willingness to make a difference. McClelland distinguished between social power needs,

i.e. the need to perform well for others and/or the entire company, and personal power needs, i.e. the need to create personal gain.

3. **Affiliation Need:** This is the need for social interaction and need to create and maintain friendships. McClelland believed that all people have different composition of the three needs, but that one of the three needs is usually dominate (Laegaard & Bindsley, 2006, p. 54).

### Research Method

A descriptive research design was used in carrying out this study. The purposeful sampling technique was used to collect data from the management staff, underwriting department staff, claims department staff, marketing department staff and accounting department staff of the selected insurance organizations through the use of a structured questionnaire. One hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered and collected. Distribution and frequency tables and percentages were used for data presentation. A four Likert scale ranging from Strongly agree - SA (4), Agree - A (3), Disagree - D (2), and Strongly disagree - SD (1) was used to measure the adequacy of the data. Only one of the hypotheses was tested using the Chi-square [ $X^2$ ] statistical tool.

### Data Presentation, Analysis and Results

Table 1

#### *Length of Service*

Length of service	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative Percentage
1-5 years	16	16	16	16
6-10 years	34	34	34	50
11-15 years	28	28	28	78
16 years	22	22	22	100
Total	100	100	100	

Table 2

#### *Wages and salaries as a factor of motivation*

Motivation Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	10	10	10	10
Agree	18	18	18	28
Disagree	45	45	45	73
Strongly Disagree	27	27	27	100
Total	100	100	100	

Table 3

*Fringe Benefits as Factor of Motivation*

Fringe Benefits	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	64	64	64	64
Agree	32	32	32	96
Disagree	4	4	4	100
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	100
Total	100	100	100	

Table 4

*In-Service Training of Workers as Factor of Motivation*

Employee Training	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	76	76	76
Agree	20	20	96
Disagree	4	4	100
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100
Total	100	100	

Table 5

*Participation in Decision Making as Factor of Motivation*

Decision Making	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	4	4
Agree	8	8	12
Disagree	30	30	42
Strongly Disagree	58	58	100
Total	100	100	

Table 6

*Promotion as Factor of Motivation*

Employee Promotion	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	20	20	20
Agree	14	14	34
Disagree	46	46	80
Strongly Disagree	20	20	100
Total	100	100	

Table 7

*Goal Clarity and Staff Performance as Factor of Motivation*

Goal Clarity	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	24	24	24
Agree	56	56	80
Disagree	12	12	92
Strongly Disagree	8	8	100
Total	100	100	

Note. Respondents were requested to indicate if goal clarity of an organization can help to improve employee performance.

Table 8

*Working Conditions as a factor for improved Performance*

Working Conditions	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	48	48	48
Agree	38	38	86
Disagree	8	8	94
Strongly Disagree	6	6	100
Total	100	100	

Note. The respondents were asked to indicate if the working conditions can lead to improved performance of the employees.

Table 9

*Use of ICT as a factor for improved performance*

Use of ICT	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	44	44	44
Agree	40	40	84
Disagree	10	10	94
Strongly Disagree	6	6	100
Total	100	100	

Note. Respondents were asked if the use of ICT can lead to improved performance of the employees.



## Relationship Between Motivation and Employee Performance

Questions 1 to 6 of this section we analysed using Likert's Scale.

Table 10

*Code and value of responses*

Option	Code	Point
Strongly Agree	SA	4
Agree	A	3
Disagree	D	2
Strongly Disagree	SD	1

Total value == Total respondents x Point of categories

Mean Average Value (MAV) =  $\frac{\text{Total value}}{\text{Total response}}$

Table 11

*Mean average value (MAV) of items 1-6*

No.	Questions	SA	A	D	SD	Total Value	MAV
1	With the help of management, my performance has improved	25	40	10	25	265	2.65
2	My performance reduced when it took my employers long time to rotate the employees	20	46	4	30	256	2.56
3	I always perform my best when I know that I am accepted at work	38	34	16	12	298	2.98
4	With the current motivational practices at my working place, the performance of the employees is reduced	26	16	28	30	238	2.38
5	Employees often endeavour to meet the set goals/objectives which attract bonus payments	44	46	8	2	332	3.32
6	There is strong relationship between employee performance and motivation	60	36	2	2	354	3.54

## Testing of Hypotheses

The test was conducted with 95% confidence level and 0.05% level of significance, (n-1) (c-1) degree of freedom.

The Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) formula is  $X^2 = \frac{(Fo - Fe)^2}{Fe}$

Where Fo = observed frequencies

Fe = expected frequencies

$$\text{i.e. expected frequency} = \frac{\text{Total Row} \times \text{Total Columns}}{\text{Grand total}}$$

$$\text{i.e. } \frac{\text{TR} \times \text{TC}}{\text{GT}}$$

H1: There is no strong relationship between employee performance and motivation.

From the table above, items 3, 4, 5 and 6 are used as data for this hypothesis.

Table 12

*Responses to items 3-6 for relationship of performance and motivation.*

Questions	SA	A	D	SD	Total
3	38	34	16	12	100
4	26	16	28	30	100
5	44	46	8	2	100
6	60	36	2	2	100
Total	168	132	54	46	400

Table 13

*Chi-square calculation for observed frequency vs expected frequency.*

Fo	Fe	Fo – Fe	[Fo-Fe] <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{[\text{Fo-Fe}]^2}{\text{Fe}}$
38	42	-4	16	0.381
34	33	1	1	0.030
16	13.5	2.5	6.25	0.463
12	11.5	0.5	0.25	0.022
26	42	-16	256	6.095
16	33	-17	289	8.758
28	13.5	14.5	210.25	15.574
30	11.5	18.5	342.25	29.761
44	42	2	4	0.095
46	33	13	169	5.121
8	13.5	-5.5	30.25	2.241
2	11.5	-9.5	90.25	7.848
60	42	18	324	7.714
36	33	3	9	0.273
2	13.5	-11.5	132.25	9.796
2	11.5	-9.5	90.25	7.848
		TOTAL	=	102.401

### Decision Rule

The rejection or acceptance of a null hypothesis is based on some level of significance as a criterion. The null hypothesis is rejected if  $X^2$  calculation is greater than  $X^{2\text{ tab}}$  and accepted for  $H_1$ . The degree of freedom at .05 level of significance is given by

$$(R-1)(C-1) = (4-1)(4-1) - (3)(3) = 9.$$

The calculated  $X^2 = 102.401$ . The critical value at 0.05 level of significance and 9 degrees of freedom is 16.919. Since the  $X^2$  calculated is 102.401 and the critical or table value at the 0.05 significance level and 9 degrees of freedom is 16.919, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is a strong relationship between employee performance and motivation.

### Summary of Findings

This study demonstrates that the selected insurance company effectively and appropriately applied positive motivation to make its employees perform extremely well. It also discovered that there is a strong relationship between motivation and employee performance. The type of motivation determined the level of performance of the employee. When positive motivation was efficiently, skillfully and effectively applied, the level of employee performance increased and vice versa.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

From the summary of findings, it can be inferred that the type of motivation will stimulate employees to perform very well and must be such that it will meet an employee's desired needs and expectations. Furthermore, motivation must be such that it will enhance an employee's promotion level and position, i.e. positive change.

This study therefore recommends that the insurance companies should always organize self-development programs for their employees. They must organize training and retraining programs as well. An employee must be moved to different departments in the insurance companies so that every staff member will acquire an all-round experience and skills within the organization. Hard work must be recognized and rewarded. All these recommendations, if put into practice or use, will reduce laziness, idleness, frustration and high labor turnover.

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# **Does Inclusive Growth Matter for Regional Integration in Africa?**

## **An Empirical Assessment**

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### **Abstract**

Inclusive growth is an important channel through which African countries can foster higher regional integration especially through trade. This is because many African countries are characterized by exclusive growth, small and fragmented domestic markets that are landlocked and often prone to external shocks. Using an augmented gravity specification, this paper conducts an empirical investigation of the relationship between regional integration and inclusive growth in Africa. The adapted model is estimated using ordinary least squares, Pseudo Poisson maximum likelihood estimator and the Blundell-Bond system generalized method of moment estimator. The empirical results reveal that inclusive growth plays a vital role towards intra-regional trade in Africa. The findings also support the need to strengthen regional and national institutions as well as provision of infrastructure. The paper makes a case for consistent and integrated national and regional policies especially with respect to the pursuit of broad based growth.

**Keywords:** *regional integration, inclusive growth, gravity model, panel data, Africa.*

### **Introduction**

Despite Africa's enormous market potentials for trade in different products, given its estimated population of over 1.11 billion as at 2013, the benefits from this positive trend is yet to be harnessed due to the exclusiveness of growth in the continent. African consumers are unable to enjoy the gains from regional markets primarily due to high poverty and income inequality occasioned by growth without the "trickle-down" effect. Comparatively, as observed in the 2012 Seminar by the Philippines Institute for Development, high economic growth and lower population growth reduced poverty but some areas still lag behind as East Asia continues to experience inequality and persistent poverty. Intra-regional trade has occupied the centre stage of sub-regional development policy with a view to improve the standard of living. Regional integration is an important avenue for African countries to foster broad-based growth (African Development Bank, 2014). In line with the classical trade theory, this would imply removal of trade restrictions. The link between trade and welfare can be traced to the growth channel (See, Dollar & Kraay, 2004). Observably, weak global growth occasioned by contemporaneous recessions prompts a shift from external to domestic and regional demand. Adequate income buffers that stabilize purchasing power should concomitantly match adverse shocks. In general, growth in most African countries has not been inclusive, as indicated by the relatively weak inclusive growth measures such as household per capita spending, job creation, and accessibility to basic infrastructure.

A striking feature of intra-regional trade in Africa is that the trend has been positive during the period of 2011-2015. Evidently, Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have dominated in this regard recording about USD3.3 and USD1.9 trillion in terms of imports compared with the USD869 billion, USD1.01 and USD1.1 trillion recorded accordingly by the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), East African Community (EAC) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The benefit of these positive trends may be difficult to harness due to inclusive growth drag in Africa. For instance, household final consumption spending is quite low with CEMAC recording USD2.5 billion in the 1991-1995 period to USD11.21 in 2011-2015 compared with the EAC's USD2.92 and USD19.99 billion during the same periods. Observably, AMU, SADC and ECOWAS dominate in this regard recording, accordingly, USD81.45, USD35.36 and USD27.83 during the period between 2011 and 2015. This obvious disconnect prompts this empirical pursuit.

Although inclusive growth remains a critical component of regional integration especially through income and consumption, it has not been given adequate attention in explaining intra-regional trade. Based on data from the World Bank's world development indicators, Africa lags behind other continents in terms of inclusive growth measures such as employment, poverty, access to basic infrastructure and inequality. This has prompted the analysis of intra-African trade using augmented gravity specifications in order to analyze the responsiveness of bilateral trade flows to income, distance, trade policy, bilateral investment treaties, FTAs, and other control variables (Ajakaiye & Ncube, 2010; Akpan, 2014; Carrere, 2004; Ebaidalla & Yahia, 2014; Golit & Adamu, 2014; Hatzenberg, 2011; Kayizza-Mugerwa et al., 2014; Ndulu, 2006; and Shuaibu, 2015). Evidently, these studies fail to account for inclusive growth, which is an important factor especially in the context of Africa since it affects regional demand and invariably, the volume of intra-regional trade. Further, very little attempt has been made to assess the interaction between inclusive growth and regional integration. This motivates this paper, in addition to the fact that the outcome of this research is expected to provide insight on regional and sub-regional trade and development policy formulation and implementation.

On the methodological front, we observe the existence of a trade flow that has a bilateral value equal to zero that may pose a selection problem. To overcome this challenge, we use alternative estimation techniques such as the Pseudo Poisson Maximum-likelihood estimator (PPML) following Silva and Tenreiro's (2006) approach. These models explain the volume of trade between countries through a Poisson distribution with a conditional mean that is exponentially related to our set of explanatory variables. In addition to the use of the fixed effect estimator, the panel causality test proposed by Dumitrescu and Hurlin (2012) that tests for Granger non-causality in heterogeneous panel data is used to check for possible reverse causation. To overcome selection bias associated with heterogeneity in gravity models, we account for unobserved time varying country-pair heterogeneity through the use of fixed effect in the spirit of Bergstrand, Larch and Yotov (2015). Moreover, Cheng and Wall (2004) opine that unless heterogeneity is accounted for correctly, gravity models can greatly overestimate the effects of

regional integration on the volume of trade.

Another important contribution of our paper is based on the empirical finding of a strong persistence in aggregate trade data (Bun and Klaassen, 2002; De Benedictis & Vicarelli, 2005; and Fidrmuc, 2009). They observed that countries engaged in trade with each other at time  $t-1$  also tend to trade at time  $t$  (*intensive margin*). We explore these dynamics by applying the dynamic panel model that uses the Blundell-Bond system GMM estimator (De Benedictis & Vicarelli, 2005). Finally, we subject our model to a battery of robustness checks to ascertain the potency of our results to sub-samples (sub-regional groups) and alternative estimators. The findings provide insight towards regional integration policy formulation and implementation, especially within the context of inclusive growth that has continued to escape policy makers in Africa. The paper will be organized as follows. Section 2 provides evidence on regional integration in Africa. Sections 3 and 4 discuss the methodology and empirical outcomes, respectively. Section 5 concludes the paper and highlights some implications for policy.

### **Evidence on Regional Integration and Inclusive Growth in Africa**

Regional integration has occupied the centre stage of the global trade system, and this is particularly important for Africa as it lags behind other continents in terms of sustained inclusive growth and development. There are several regional integration arrangements in Africa out of which eight are regional economic communities: the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and six are inter-governmental organizations: the Central African Monetary and Economic Community (CEMAC), the Economic Community of the Great Lakes States (CEPGL), the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), the Mano River Union (MRU), the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and the West African and Monetary Union (UEMOA). Their main objective is the pursuit of economic, social, political, technological and legal cooperation. Such arrangements are deepened through the formation of customs and monetary unions, common markets and a regional judiciary. They also seek to promote and liberalize inter- and intra-regional trade through harmonized tariffs.

A striking feature of intra-regional trade in Africa is that the trend has been positive during the review period across the sub-regional arrangements considered (See Table 1.). Evidently, AMU and SADC have dominated in this regard recording about USD3.3 and USD1.9 trillion in terms of imports compared with the USD869 billion, USD1.01 and USD1.1 trillion recorded accordingly by CEMAC, EAC and ECOWAS. This positive trend may be explained by the significant impact of regional trade agreements amongst member countries in the various sub-regional bodies, especially with respect to the harmonized common external tariffs. Concurrently, intra-African exports have also exhibited a remarkable upward trend that mirrored the behavioral pattern of intra-African imports.

Table 1

*Intra-African Trade Performance*

	AMU	CEMAC	EAC	ECOWAS	SADC
Period	Total Intra-Africa Imports (USD Billion)				
1991-1995	346.83	72.20	134.17	143.44	278.80
1996-2000	374.34	131.34	227.46	194.93	489.99
2001-2005	597.51	188.67	354.82	344.83	652.66
2006-2010	1439.18	487.99	718.44	750.03	1654.39
2011-2015	1967.37	869.26	1008.02	1077.53	3284.91
	Total Intra-Africa Exports (USD Billion)				
1991-1995	266.32	34.07	109.63	146.85	86.39
1996-2000	284.54	36.53	185.60	214.81	269.94
2001-2005	506.19	64.47	286.06	342.82	584.01
2006-2010	1404.70	299.45	554.46	759.89	1327.31
2011-2015	2272.04	498.24	810.39	1254.58	3074.75

*Source: International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics online*

The inherent weaknesses of most African economies exacerbated the inclusive growth drag observed in Table 2. Household final consumption expenditure is quite low across the board with CEMAC recording USD2.5 billion in the 1991-1995 period and USD11.21 in 2011-2015. The EAC also recorded USD2.92 and USD19.99 billion during the same periods. Observably, AMU, SADC and ECOWAS dominate in this regard recording, accordingly, USD81.45, USD35.36 and USD27.83. These developments may be traced to the resource dependence and less conflict-prone countries in the sub-regions that recorded higher values. Although unemployment as a percentage of total labor force has declined across the sub-regional bodies during the review period, the most significant positive trends were recorded in AMU and ECOWAS while the EAC recorded the highest share with 9.12% and AMU, CEMAC and ECOWAS documented a 5% average compared with the relatively high value observed in the case of SADC.

Good governance and institutions have been identified as important drivers of intra-regional exports (Shuaibu, 2015). Notably, the relatively low level of intra-regional trade in Africa may be traced to the poor governance and weak institutions that have bedevilled the continent's overall development and sustained trade amongst African countries. For instance, all the sub-regions have recorded very weak regulatory quality, high corruption and political instability. Evidence from the World Bank World Development Indicators reveals that between 2013 and 2014, the ECOWAS sub-region recorded a positive trend in terms of political stability and this may have contributed to the improved intra-regional trade flows recorded at the time.



Table 2

*Inclusive Growth Indicators*

	AMU	CEMAC	EAC	ECOWAS	SADC
Period	Household final consumption expenditure (USD Billion)				
1991-1995	21.49	2.49	2.92	3.40	9.81
1996-2000	29.02	2.42	4.86	4.30	13.08
2001-2005	30.72	3.72	5.52	6.81	14.22
2006-2010	51.12	7.71	11.75	15.18	25.46
2011-2015	81.45	11.21	19.99	27.83	35.36
	Unemployment, total (% of total labour force)				
1991-1995	12.40	800.17	18.69	16.62	742.59
1996-2000	3.61	134.91	10.23	7.05	141.64
2001-2005	1.63	19.65	6.46	6.27	41.15
2006-2010	5.36	8.04	9.75	6.49	10.99
2011-2015	5.45	5.65	9.12	5.16	8.13
	Employment to population ratio, 15+, total (%) (national estimate)				
1991-1995	43.98	69.20	81.90	61.37	53.89
1996-2000	43.30	60.87	73.68	59.05	51.73
2001-2005	44.57	70.08	72.63	63.29	60.45
2006-2010	42.07	50.50	76.48	63.33	55.18
2011-2015	40.85	71.00	76.60	68.63	61.55

*Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators online*

The concept of inclusive growth also involves access of the greatest number to the requisite infrastructure. While *teledensity* and information and communication technology-related access have improved significantly in Africa (World Bank Group, 2018), improved access to sanitation facilities and improved water sources have been somewhat stagnant with minimal improvement during the review period. In addition to the high incidence of poverty and low income in the continent, this may also be explained by inadequate efforts by the government towards providing these facilities for the rapidly growing population and attendant pressure on existing facilities.

## Methodology

### Analytical Framework

Given the plethora of analytical expositions, the main focus in the literature is a precise estimation of the gravity equation. One important theoretical contribution in the gravity literature is related to the structural form of the equation and the implication of misspecification or omitted variable bias. In particular, the way trade costs and firm heterogeneity are incorporated in the gravity equation as populated by the contributions of Anderson and van Wincoop (2001, 2003) and Helpman, Melitz and Rubinstein (2008). The heterogeneity in firm behavior is mainly due to

fixed and variable costs that are market specific and higher for international trade than for domestic markets. Consequently, only the most productive firms are able to cover these costs and find it profitable to export. The profitability of exports varies by country destination and is higher for countries' higher demand, but lower costs of exporting.

### **Link between inclusive growth and trade.**

The framework of this study draws from the trade-welfare transmission channel developed by McCulloch, Winters and Cirera (2001) which illustrates how trade policy changes affect households through increase in consumption, production and exports. We illustrate how trade liberalization can offer considerable opportunities to poor households but also increase their vulnerability in terms of its short- and medium-term adverse impacts. First, RTAs in form of freer trade can translate into larger market for consumers with increased product varieties. Regional integration can also lead to lower transaction costs (TC) and increased competition from foreign producers (DD), and therefore lower prices for consumers which in turn leads to an increase in household consumption (HC). An important feature of this channel is that it emphasizes the households' abilities to change income sources and consumption patterns in response to changes in relative prices.

$$RTA \rightarrow TC \downarrow \rightarrow DD \uparrow \rightarrow HC$$

Second, RTAs can reduce trade costs for imported inputs used in the production process. This translates to lower production costs (PC) that can in turn increase firm competitiveness (SS) in local and international markets (EX). Increased competitiveness spurs business expansion, job creation and higher household income. Trade liberalization can also change the composition of goods produced by local firms. In a seminal paper, Aghion et al. (2005) argue that firms with different capabilities tend to respond differently to increased competition. More competition can result in re-allocation of resources from less productive to more productive export-oriented firms (Melitz & Ottaviano, 2008). It can also lead to higher within-firm productivity through efficiency gains as firms become exposed to more sophisticated intermediates and technology that increase technical efficiency and capacity to expand production.

$$RTA \rightarrow PC \downarrow \rightarrow SS \uparrow \rightarrow EX \uparrow$$

Finally, with increased competition due to RTAs, firms tend to focus more on products that have comparative advantage and export more of these products (Bernard, Redding & Schott, 2007). This is particularly crucial for producers in developing countries that face significant technological constraints in terms of access to adequate imported inputs. Alternatively, increased household welfare leads to increased productivity and higher output which can lead to increased output of exports. Increased household welfare also implies increased propensity to import a variety of goods from abroad.

### **Empirical Model**

The framework used in this study draws from the theoretical gravity model proposed by Bergstrand (1989) for the following reasons. First, it is widely accepted in the literature. Second,

it incorporates the modelling of multilateral trade resistance which accounts for omitted variable bias in the estimated gravity coefficients (Baldwin & Taglioni, 2006).

In its traditional form, the gravity model predicts that bilateral trade flows (exports or imports) between countries is determined by national incomes of the exporting and importing countries and the geographical distance between them. The income (GDP) of the exporting country indicates the supply capacity whereas the importing country's GDP indicates the total demand. The geographic distance between the countries is used to measure transport costs. The multiplicative gravity equation is given by:

$$EX_{ij,t} = \alpha_0 GDP_{it}^{\alpha_1} GDP_{jt}^{\alpha_2} dist_{ij}^{\alpha_3} \quad (1)$$

Further extensions have justified the inclusion of additional control variables in the gravity model such as exchange rate risk variables including volatility and currency union (Bergstrand, 1985; Frankel & Rose, 2005; & Rose, 2000), geographical factors such as common border, landlocked, island and remoteness (Feenstra, Romalis & Schott, 2002; Frankel and Rose, 2002; Silva and Tenreyro, 2006; & Soloaga and Winters, 2001;), membership of RTAs (Baier and Bergstrand, 2007, 2009; & Frankel & Rose, 2002). Including these additional factors in equation (1) and taking the natural logarithm yields a log linear gravity model given as:

$$\begin{aligned} \ln(EX_{ij,t}) = & \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \ln(GDP_{it}) + \alpha_2 \ln(GDP_{jt}) + \alpha_3 \ln(dist_{ij}) + \alpha_4 \ln(POP_{it}) + \\ & \alpha_5 \ln(POP_{jt}) + \alpha_6 \ln(lang_{ij}) + \alpha_7 \ln(col_{ij}) + \alpha_8 land_{ij} + \alpha_9 border_{ij} + \alpha_{10} RTA_{ij} + \\ & \alpha_{11} ICG_{it} + \alpha_{12} ICG_{jt} + \beta_{13} INFR_{ij} + \alpha_{14} INST_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij,t} \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

Where  $EX_{ij,t}$  is the value of exports between country  $i$  and country  $j$  at year  $t$ ,  $GDP_{it}$  and  $GDP_{jt}$  are respectively the national incomes for country  $i$  and  $j$  in year  $t$  and  $distance_{ij}$  is the geographical distance between the major cities of countries  $i$  and country  $j$ .  $POP_{it}$  and  $POP_{jt}$  are the population in country  $i$  and  $j$  in year  $t$ . GDP and population are the proxy for the supply and demand capacities of the two trading countries respectively.  $RTA_{ij}$  is a binary variable assuming the value 1 if  $i$  and  $j$  have a regional trade agreement (specifically, ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, CEMAC, AMU) and 0 otherwise,  $lock_{ij}$  is a binary variable which assumes the value of 1 if country  $i$  and country  $j$  are both landlocked countries,  $lang_{ij}$  is a binary variable that takes the value 1 if  $i$  and  $j$  share a common official language and 0. Otherwise,  $border_{ij}$  is a binary variable assuming the value 1 if  $i$  and  $j$  share a common land border and 0 otherwise,  $col_{ij}$  is a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if country  $i$  and country  $j$  share the same colonial history,  $INF_{ij}$  is a measure of quality of infrastructure,  $INST_{ij}$  is a measure of the quality of institutions.  $\alpha_0$  is a constant of proportionality.

An important aspect and thus contribution of this study is to show that inclusive growth can foster regional integration through increased intra-regional trade flows between countries (Bernard, Redding & Schott, 2007). This is particularly important in the context of African countries where inclusive growth remains at the forefront of regional and national development pursuit. Therefore, we use household final consumption expenditure to account for the effect of inclusive growth for country  $i$  ( $ICG_i$ ) and for country  $j$  ( $ICG_j$ ). Alternative measures of inclusive

growth used for robustness checks include percentage share of the population that have access to improved sanitation and water source.

Finally,  $\varepsilon_{ij,t}$  is the two-way error component term  $\varepsilon_{ij,t} = \gamma_i + \theta_t + \mu_{ij,t}$  where  $\gamma_i$  is the unobserved individual country-specific (exporter and importer) effects, and these are accounted for through exporter ( $\delta_i$ ) and importer ( $\delta_j$ ) fixed effects – the multilateral resistant term.  $\theta_t$  is unobserved time effect, and  $\mu_{ij,t}$  is the remaining part of the stochastic disturbance term. All of these fixed effects correct the biases from estimating panel data (Baldwin & Taglioni, 2006)

*Apriori*, the key coefficients of interest  $\alpha_{11}$  and  $\alpha_{12}$  are expected to be positive as higher inclusive growth facilitates higher exports and stimulates higher imports.  $\alpha_1$  and  $\alpha_4$  are expected to be positive as a high level of income and population in the exporting country denote a high level of production *ceteris paribus*, which increases the exports of goods. The coefficients on  $\alpha_2$  and  $\alpha_5$  are also expected to be positive as a high income level in importing countries stimulates higher imports. The distance coefficient  $\alpha_3$  is however expected to be negative as it is a proxy of all trade cost. Finally, the coefficients on *lang*, *col*, *land* and *RTA* are all expected to be positive while the coefficient on *border* is expected to be negative.

## Estimation Strategy

The estimation procedures carried out in this study are in two phases. The first stage entails conducting baseline regressions using ordinary least square (OLS) regression. In this type of regression, the individual-specific effect is a random variable that is correlated with the explanatory variables. Therefore, we allow individual errors in different time periods to be correlated (Hill, Griffiths & Lim, 2012). Secondly, the Pseudo Poisson Maximum Likelihood (PPML) estimator is utilized. This method is appropriate because in the presence of heteroscedasticity, the PPML estimator performs better since OLS is not efficient (Silva & Tenreyro, 2006). The logarithmic linearization of an empirical model in the presence of heteroscedasticity leads to inconsistent estimates because the expected value of the logarithm of a random variable depends on higher-order moments of its distribution (Silva & Tenreyro, 2006).

There are two important methodological concerns associated with selection bias in gravity models. The first concern is related to the bias that arises from multilateral resistance. Anderson and van Wincoop (2003), who extended on Anderson (1979), showed that the flow of bilateral trade is influenced by trade impediments that exist at the bilateral level (bilateral resistance) and by the relative weight of these obstacles with respect to all other countries (the multilateral resistance). To account for this bias, we control for time varying and time-invariant unobserved country characteristics that are common to both countries. Rose and van Wincoop (2001) and Baier and Bergstrand (2007) applied similar approaches to account for multilateral resistance terms.

The second source of methodological concern is related to selection bias associated with the presence of heterogeneous firms operating internationally. Contrary to what is implied by models of monopolistic competition *à la* Krugman (1979), not all existing firms operate on international markets. Contradicting results find that only a few firms serve foreign markets (Bernard, Redding & Schott, 2007; & Mayer & Ottaviano, 2008) and not all exporting firms export

to all foreign markets, as they are generally active in a subset of countries. The critical resulting implication of firm heterogeneity for modelling the gravity equation is that the matrix of bilateral trade flows is not full since many cells have a zero entry, more frequently at the aggregate level.

The existence of trade flows that have a bilateral value equal to zero may signal a selection problem. If the zero entries are the result of the firm choice of not selling specific goods to specific markets (or its inability to do so), the standard OLS estimation of the gravity equation would be inappropriate as it would produce biased results (Helpman, Melitz & Rubenstein, 2008). This is primarily due to two reasons. First, it is not possible to raise a number to any power and end up with zero, the log of zero is undefined, and zero-trade flows cannot be treated with logarithmic specifications. Second, the zeroes are non-randomly distributed as they indicate the absence of trade, hence suggesting that barriers to trade are prohibitive to allow a particular trade relationship to take place at a given level of demand and supply.

Therefore, we also use the PPML, where the dependent variable is expressed in levels instead of logarithms as suggested by Silva and Tenreyro (2006). Poisson models were originally applicable for count data, but as pointed out by Wooldridge (2002), they are also applicable when using non-negative continuous dependent variables. These models explain the volume of trade between countries through a Poisson distribution with a conditional mean that is exponentially related to the set of explanatory variables. Other studies in the literature use the Tobit model to deal with the zero valued trade flows (Andersen & Marcoiller, 2002; Rose, 2004). However, this method has some shortcoming as it involves artificial censoring of small trade values which is subject to measurement errors and biased results (Rose, 2000; & Silva & Tenreyro, 2011). We tested the results against different measures of inclusive growth.

## Data Description

The variables used for estimation are taken from different sources. The dependent variable, i.e. the bilateral trade (export) flow between countries, is from the IMF, Direction of Trade Statistics covering 49 African countries between 1990 and 2015 counting about 45,923 data points. Exporters and importers' nominal GDP, and GDP per capita income, population and real exchange rate are taken from World Development Indicators (WDI) database. Bilateral distance, area and other dummy variables (contiguity, official language, common colonizer, and whether the countries are landlocked or not) are derived from CEPII database. Detailed variable description and data source can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

*Description of Variables used in Estimation*

SN	Variable	Symbol	Description	Source
1	Regional Integration	RI	Intra-African Exports (million USD)	International Monetary Fund Direction Of Trade Statistics

Table 3 (continued)

2	Improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access)	ICG1	Improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access)	World Bank World Development Indicators
3	Improved water source (% of population with access)	ICG2	Access to an improved water source refers to the percentage of the population using an improved drinking water source.	World Bank World Development Indicators
4	Household final consumption expenditure, etc. (current US\$)	ICG3	Household final consumption expenditure (formerly private consumption) is the market value of all goods and services purchased by households.	World Bank World Development Indicators
5	GDP at market prices (current US\$)	GDP	GDP at purchaser's prices is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products.	World Bank World Development Indicators
6	Official exchange rate (LCU per US\$, period average)	ER	Official exchange rate refers to the exchange rate determined by national authorities or to the rate determined in the legally sanctioned exchange market.	World Bank World Development Indicators
7	Control of Corruption (estimate)	INSTQ1	Control of corruption measures the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as “capture” of the state by elites and private interests.	World Bank Institute.

Table 3 (continued)

8	Political Stability/No Violence (estimate)	POLSTAB	Political stability and absence of violence measures the perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including domestic violence or terrorism.	World Bank Institute.
9	Regulatory Quality (estimate)	GOVN	Regulatory quality measures the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development.	World Bank Institute.
10	Population, total	POP	Total population is based on the de facto definition of population, which counts all residents regardless of legal status or citizenship.	United Nations Population Division. 2009. World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision
11	Mobile and fixed-line telephone subscribers (per 100 people)	INFRA4	Mobile and fixed-line subscribers are total telephone subscribers (fixed-line plus mobile).	International Telecommunication Union, World Telecommunication/ICT Development Report And Database, And World Bank Estimates.
12	Distance	dist	Geographical distance between country of origin and destination	Mayer And Zignago (2006) Index
13	Distance	distcap	Simple distance (most populated cities, km)	Mayer And Zignago (2006) Index
14	Weighted distance	distw	Weighted distance (population-wt, km)	Mayer And Zignago (2006) Index

Table 3 (continued)

15	Weighted distance, CES	distwces	Weighted distance (pop-wt, km) CES	Mayer And Zignago (2006) Index
16	Landlocked	landlocked	If both countries are landlocked	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
17	Country code	iso	Country code for origin and destination country	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
18	Border dummy	border		Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
19	Common language	comlang_off	Common official language	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
20	Common colonial relationship	Colony	Colonial relationship	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
21	Common coloniser	Comcol	Common colonizer post 1945	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
22	Dummy if currently in colonial relationship	curcol	If currently in colonial relationship	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
23		col45	Colonial relationship post 1945	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010
24	Similar country	smctry	If countries were or are the same country	Head, K., T. Mayer And J. Ries, 2010

### Empirical Results and Discussion

The results of the basic regressions are presented in Table 4. Since the number of time series observations (years) are relatively smaller than the number of cross-sectional observations (countries), we do not need to worry about time series estimation procedures such as stationarity, spurious regression and cointegration of the variables. The basic OLS results are presented in the first three columns and the last three present the results for the PPML. The coefficients of inclusive growth are positive and significant, as expected, in all the regressions, suggesting that inclusive growth exerts a positive impact on export flows within Africa. As expected, economic size (GDP) positively influences exports and imports while population only influences exports. For all models, the coefficients on the income elasticities of exporters' and importers' GDP are far below the theoretical value of 1. However, both GDP and population coefficients are not significant in the regressions where inclusive growth is measured by household final consumption expenditure. Distance negatively affects trade flows, suggesting that trade decreases with greater distance



between country-pairs due to increasing trade costs. The landlocked dummy is also significant and negative for both exporting and importing countries, implying that countries are also likely to trade less with other countries due to higher trade costs.

The results also show that countries that share the same border and language are likely to trade more than countries that do not share the same border and speak different languages. The presence of telecommunication infrastructure and effective institutions that control corrupt practices especially along the borders of exporting and importing countries are likely to increase trade between country-pairs. In line with *a priori*, the regional trade agreements between country-pairs have a positive effect on trade and the potency of the impact is higher for SADC and EAC relative to ECOWAS. However, no effect was observed for CEMAC and AMU sub-regions. These results are robust to the exclusion of zero trade flows as suggested in the literature.

Table 4

*Regression results for regional integration and inclusive growth*

The dependent variable is	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intra-African Exports (million USD)	OLS	OLS	OLS	PPML	PPML	PPML
ICG1 (exporter)	0.707*** (0.125)			0.056*** (0.010)		
ICG1 (importer)	0.223* (0.125)			0.017* (0.010)		
ICG2 (exporter)		1.638*** (0.308)			0.128*** (0.026)	
ICG2 (importer)		1.053*** (0.259)			0.083*** (0.021)	
ICG3 (exporter)			1.270*** (0.266)			0.092*** (0.021)
ICG3 (importer)			0.361* (0.253)			0.027* (0.020)
GDP (exporter)	0.368*** (0.108)	0.539*** (0.092)	-0.192 (0.226)	0.031*** (0.008)	0.044*** (0.007)	-0.009 (0.018)
GDP (importer)	0.564*** (0.100)	0.542*** (0.088)	0.397 (0.217)	0.045*** (0.008)	0.043*** (0.007)	0.032 (0.017)
Population (exporter)	0.572*** (0.113)	0.446*** (0.107)	-0.040 (0.104)	0.043*** (0.009)	0.033*** (0.009)	-0.003 (0.008)
Population (importer)	0.097	0.143	-0.045	0.008	0.011	-0.004

Table 4 (continued)

	(0.099)	(0.093)	(0.100)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Distance	-1.567***	-1.494***	-1.484***	-0.123***	-0.117***	-0.115***
	(0.135)	(0.134)	(0.140)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Official common language	0.926***	0.816***	0.900***	0.076***	0.068***	0.074***
	(0.140)	(0.141)	(0.154)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)
Border	0.874***	1.037***	0.887***	0.057***	0.070***	0.058***
	(0.274)	(0.273)	(0.275)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Landlocked (exporter)	-1.192***	-1.189***	-0.955***	-0.096***	-0.096***	-0.078***
	(0.167)	(0.165)	(0.181)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.015)
Landlocked (importer)	-0.818***	-0.810***	-0.771***	-0.064***	-0.064***	-0.060***
	(0.165)	(0.169)	(0.178)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.014)
INSTQ1 (exporter)	0.744***	0.683***	0.703***	0.059***	0.054***	0.055***
	(0.111)	(0.110)	(0.114)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
INSTQ1 (importer)	0.203*	0.243**	0.222*	0.016*	0.018**	0.018**
	(0.105)	(0.109)	(0.115)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.009)
INFRA4 (exporter)	0.008***	0.007***	0.005**	0.001***	0.000***	0.000**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
INFRA4 (importer)	-0.005***	-0.009***	-0.008***	-0.000***	-0.001***	-0.001***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
SADC	1.178***	1.377***	1.272***	0.095***	0.109***	0.098***
	(0.282)	(0.270)	(0.294)	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.021)
EAC	1.304**	1.534***	1.799***	0.109**	0.125***	0.144***
	(0.625)	(0.571)	(0.611)	(0.047)	(0.043)	(0.045)
ECOWAS	0.738***	0.445*	0.509*	0.065***	0.041**	0.046**
	(0.256)	(0.261)	(0.266)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.020)
CEMAC	0.194	0.278	0.180	0.026	0.033	0.024
	(0.488)	(0.490)	(0.493)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)
AMU	-0.164	0.151	0.280	-0.046	-0.024	-0.009
	(0.423)	(0.394)	(0.407)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.028)
Constant	-11.185***	-21.820***	-16.369***	0.620***	-0.208	0.283*
	(1.985)	(2.452)	(2.168)	(0.155)	(0.197)	(0.165)

Table 4 (continued)

year*exporter FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
year*importer FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	13,803	13,596	12,281	13,803	13,596	12,281
Adj. R-squared	0.45	0.45	0.44			

*Source: Authors Calculation using STATA 13*

Notes: The dependent variable is the log of export flows (in Million USD) and is computed at the country-pair and year level. Columns 1 present the key results where inclusive growth is measured by improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access). Columns 2 and 3 present the results where inclusive growth is measured by improved water source (% of population with access) and Household final consumption expenditure (current US\$) respectively. All regressions are estimated with year\*importer and year\*exporter fixed effects. Robust standard errors in parenthesis below the estimated coefficients are clustered at country-pair level. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

### Further Analysis: Dynamic Gravity Equation

As a preliminary test to the system GMM estimation, common and individual coefficient panel causality tests were carried out to check for possible reverse causation. These tests make different assumptions about homogeneity of the coefficients across the cross sections. On one hand, the common coefficient test treats the panel as homogenous in the standard Granger causality sense and does not allow the data from one cross section to interact with lagged values of the data from the next cross section. However, this does not account for heterogeneities across countries. Dumitrescu and Hurlin (2012) propose an alternative assumption that allows all coefficients to vary across cross sections. We present evidence of reverse causation between regional integration (RI) and two measures of inclusive growth (ICG1 and ICG3) but observed a one-way causal association in the case between RI and ICG2. This finding is reinforced by the panel Granger causality test that assumes homogeneity in the cross sections. These estimation results are not presented in this paper but are available upon request.

Thus, we explored dynamic interaction in the gravity model for two reasons. First, due to the behavior of export which is assumed to be autoregressive (Costantini & Melitz, 2008); and second due to strong persistence found in the aggregate trade data (Bun & Klaassen, 2002; De Benedicts & Vicarelli, 2005; & Fidrmuc, 2009). We explored these dynamics by applying the dynamic panel estimation model that uses the Blundell-Bond system GMM estimator (De Benedicts & Vicarelli, 2005). Finally, the validity of the instruments was tested using the Sargan/Hansen test of over-identifying restrictions, which considers the sample analogy of the moment conditions used in the estimation process.

The results of the GMM estimator are presented in Table 5. The Sargan/Hansen tests of over identifying restrictions are satisfactory, as is the Arellano–Bond test for AR (2) errors. We find very significant evidence that intra-African trade flows are autoregressive, which is consistent with

Costantini and Melitz (2008). Most importantly, inclusive growth is found to be a significant determinant of intra-African trade flows. The GMM estimates in column 1, for example, suggest that a percentage point increase in improved sanitation facilities increases trade flows for the exporting country by 1.30 and 0.48 percentage points for the importing country. The results are stronger when inclusive growth is measured by improved water source, recording 2.13 and 1.39 percentage points for the exporting and importing countries, respectively.

Table 5

*Regression results for the dynamics of regional integration and inclusive growth*

The dependent variable is Intra-African Exports (million USD)	(1)	(2)	(3)
	GMM	GMM	GMM
lag(Intra-African Exports)	-0.136*** (0.031)	-0.143*** (0.031)	-0.067** (0.035)
ICG1 (exporter)	1.303*** (0.267)		
ICG1 (importer)	0.477** (0.228)		
ICG2 (exporter)		2.130*** (0.626)	
ICG2 (importer)		1.390** (0.571)	
ICG3 (exporter)			1.418*** (0.527)
ICG3 (importer)			0.136* (0.540)
Distance	-1.528*** (0.217)	-1.424*** (0.228)	-1.126*** (0.220)
GDP (exporter)	0.647*** (0.173)	0.570*** (0.192)	-0.243 (0.474)
GDP (importer)	0.386* (0.201)	0.321 (0.214)	0.585 (0.493)
Population (exporter)	0.343* (0.178)	0.490** (0.207)	-0.124 (0.193)
Population (importer)	0.434** (0.191)	0.522** (0.219)	0.385* (0.200)
Official common language	0.658*** (0.224)	0.683*** (0.229)	0.739*** (0.228)
Border	0.859** (0.417)	1.037** (0.405)	0.926** (0.401)

Table 5 (continued)

Landlocked (exporter)	-1.173*** (0.280)	-1.433*** (0.278)	-1.134*** (0.286)
Landlocked (importer)	-0.930*** (0.287)	-1.010*** (0.289)	-0.975*** (0.289)
INSTQ1 (exporter)	0.344** (0.140)	0.475*** (0.142)	0.346** (0.134)
INSTQ1 (importer)	0.277* (0.148)	0.349** (0.147)	0.302** (0.142)
INFRA4 (exporter)	-0.000 (0.004)	0.004 (0.004)	0.002 (0.004)
INFRA4 (importer)	-0.002 (0.004)	-0.006 (0.004)	-0.006 (0.004)
SADC	2.180*** (0.410)	2.609*** (0.394)	2.428*** (0.405)
EAC	1.603* (0.882)	1.757** (0.797)	2.505*** (0.752)
CEMAC	-0.546 (0.868)	-0.443 (0.879)	-0.044 (0.777)
ECOWAS	1.505*** (0.407)	0.757** (0.383)	0.734** (0.369)
AMU	-0.128 (0.461)	0.516 (0.453)	0.601 (0.440)
Constant	-16.190*** (3.510)	-25.890*** (4.198)	-18.515*** (3.609)
year*exporter FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
year*importer FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Arellano-Bond test for AR(2)	-1.41 (pr>z = 0.116)	-1.08 (pr>z = 0.148)	-1.22 (pr>z = 0.221)
Sargan Test	7191 (pr> $\chi^2$ = 0.000)	7067 (pr> $\chi^2$ = 0.000)	6583 (pr> $\chi^2$ = 0.000)
Number of observations	7,011	7,043	6,329
Number of groups	576	576	551

Source: Authors Calculation using STATA 13

Notes: The dependent variable is the log of export flows (in Million USD) and is computed at the country-pair and year level. Columns 1 present the key results where inclusive growth is measured by improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access). Columns 2 and 3 present the results where inclusive growth is measured by improved water source (% of population with access) and Household final consumption expenditure (current US\$) respectively. All regressions are estimated with year\*importer and year\*exporter fixed effects. Robust standard errors in

parenthesis below the estimated coefficients are clustered at country-pair level. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

### **Conclusion and Policy Implications**

The need to increase the volume trade amongst African countries cannot be downplayed given the enormous market potential of the region. However, Africa's growth has at best been exclusive as the benefits of aggregate growth have not benefited the larger majority. This has been exacerbated by the high incidence of poverty and inequality recorded in African countries. Instructively, we argue that inclusive growth can play a very crucial role towards boosting intra-African trade given the fact that it visibly improves welfare and household income, thereby expanding their spending space. In the absence of broad based growth that improves the purchasing power and welfare of households, the quest for higher intra-African imports and exports remains a mirage.

Therefore, this paper sought to ascertain whether inclusive growth matters for increased intra-African trade. Predicated on a gravity specification that accounts for alternative measures of inclusive growth, the model was estimated using static and dynamic panel data analysis techniques. From the empirical analysis conducted in this paper, some key findings emerge. It was observed that the traditional gravity model variables (GDP, population, bilateral distance, common border, common official language, and landlockedness) are found to be important determinants of bilateral trade flow in Africa. Besides these factors, improved infrastructure and better institutional framework also influence multilateral trade flow within the continent. As measured by GDP of exporting and importing countries, production capacity and demand potential also positively affect trade between countries. Geographic distance and landlockedness are found to be detrimental to intra-regional trade. Another important finding is that landlocked countries incur higher per unit cost of export and import and therefore, such countries tend to trade less compared to those countries with access to international waters. Cultural ties between the trading partners was found to be trade creating.

The empirical findings show mixed results related to the contribution of regional economic communities (RECs) on intra-regional trade in Africa. The result from the traditional gravity model shows that three of the RTAs (SADC, EAC and ECOWAS) have created trade among the members. On the other hand, CEMAC and AMU have not contributed to the promotion of trade between member countries. The quantitative evidence presented in this paper provides insights regarding the link between regional trade integration and inclusive growth. Specifically, the need to tackle important binding constraints such as poor infrastructure, weak institutions and the exclusiveness of growth with a view on boosting intra-African trade remains critical for the region. The importance of these issues has been underscored by the African Development Bank's (AfDB) long term regional integration policy and strategy plan.

Our findings do not make a case for the formulation and implementation of new policies; rather, it makes a case for implementing the existing regional trade and inclusive growth policies. This would particularly require strengthening institutional capacities and higher sub-regional

socio-economic cooperation. This means that at the sub-regional level, there is a need to ensure that inclusive regional integration policies are pursued by member countries. This is because the sub-regional bodies can serve as a potent medium for developing infrastructure, and increase financial integration as well as leverage trade, investment and value chains. This will no doubt reduce the cost of trade and increase trade facilitation through the removal of trade restriction. This can be done by strengthening and harmonizing regional trade arrangements such as the common external tariff as well as other multilateral protocols related to free movement of persons, goods and services.

Another important policy implication from our findings is related to Africa's weak infrastructure which negatively affected its competitiveness, productivity, and share of global and intra-regional trade. This makes a case for a regional approach towards infrastructure development especially in the ICT, power and water sectors, amongst others. On the other hand, regional infrastructure should be made accessible and affordable. For instance, regulated pricing and subsidy may be considered to help protect vulnerable groups and households from being excluded. At the same time, local content-based development should be considered.

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## **Indigenous Knowledge and the Development Debate in Africa**

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### **Abstract**

This research employs Bourdieu's theory of habitus to explain the disposition of the donor community to integrate indigenous knowledge systems and practices into development projects. The theory's objectivist perspective specifies the mechanism that links structural conditioning to social practice and regularities. It holds that power is culturally and symbolically created, and it is constantly re-legitimized through the interplay of agency and structure. This facilitates an analysis of the development field as social space characterized by indigenous and donor power relations. It argues that the reinforcement of indigenous knowledge as the main channel for development will generate transferable local capacities and set new energies in motion in Africa that will greatly reduce the prevailing inequalities on the continent.

### **Introduction**

This article employs Bourdieu's theory of habitus to explain the disposition of the donor community to integrate indigenous knowledge systems and practices into development projects. The analysis is built on Bourdieu's objectivist perspective which specifies the mechanism that links structural conditioning to social practice and regularities. It uses this insight to explore indigenous knowledge, being the idea of "local ownership" in development, as a "cultural and symbolic capital" in the development field where the interplay of indigenous and donor ideas produces outcomes. The aim is to analyze indigenous practices as a cultural capital for resisting wholesale imposition of knowledge.

The argument is articulated in twofold: the first part situates the analysis in Bourdieu's theory of practice, i.e. Bourdieu's habitus, to analyze the development field as social space characterized by forces of power relations (indigenous and donor). Indigenous epistemic systems are increasingly regaining recognition as a critical strand of thoughts in opposition to the modernity perspective (Shiza & Abdi, 2014). In the second part, we advocate for a paradigm shift on development thinking and practice that reinforces the role of indigenous knowledge, not as a privilege but as a standardized means for development practice. We took the argument up from a general understanding as the need for local participation in development (Sillitoe, 1998) urging a necessity to bolster indigenous knowledge over donor ideas in the development practice. Our view is not far from Shiza and Abdi's observation that anchoring African knowledge and development is a way of disrupting the global ethno-racial hierarchy to present African ideas of development on the global scale on equal terms to other paradigms. We argue that the use of indigenous knowledge as the main channel for development will generate transferable local capacities and set

new energies in motion in Africa that will curb the prevailing crisis of development on the continent.

The concept of development itself remains a very controversial issue as it tends to mean different thing to different people. As we do not intend to go into the muddled debate on the meaning of development, for this paper, we will adopt a definition that views it as being a process that encompasses the needs and means by which to provide better lives for people in the poorest countries. This definition of development is not only restricted to economic prosperity, but also includes the provision of education, health, food and a sustainable environment which together constitute essential ingredients of human development. Taken from this perspective, we agree that Africa remains one of the poorest continents in the world as most of its people are still mired in poverty despite the significant decline in world poverty in recent years.

The current dismal state of development coupled with the absence of social equity in present-day Africa makes the achievement of an intergenerational equity almost impossible. Works devoted to explaining why Africa has not been able to achieve the level of development deemed necessary for a sizeable portion of its population abound. Mainstream development studies, mostly in anthropological literature, attributed the adoption of indigenous knowledge (IK) in development projects to the failure of top-down, fabricated development frameworks that has dominated development strategies for decades. The dominant argument on the inclusion of indigenous knowledge (local ownership), particularly in anthropological literature, in development projects in non-Western societies is that its adoption will enable development agencies and NGOs to achieve desired universal human conditions. Similarly, the tremendous progress made by China and India in the past few decades has further reduced Africa to the continent with the highest number of people living below the poverty line with one dollar a day or less (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2010).

There is therefore a persistent antagonism amongst scholars and practitioners alike as to the best approach that can lead Africa out of its current development problems. While some scholars have suggested that the problems of the continent can best be resolved by promoting economic growth; others argue that institutional reforms are the panacea to Africa's lasting problems. The only unanimity amongst most scholars is that their respective approaches are based on a Eurocentric perspective that further reinforces the notion of European exceptionalism. We address the different facets of the complex approaches to Africa's near to endemic development challenges in the section on the development debate. This section reviews the status of the development debate with the aim of answering the question of how indigenous knowledge can be harnessed to speed up development in African communities.

This paper is divided into three main sections. The next part recapitulates the development debate beginning from the growth theories of the 1940s to the present dominant neoliberal school of thought. The second part of the paper builds on the analysis of the theory of habitus that roots indigenous knowledge of development in an understanding of embodied capital of local people. The disposition of the donor community to integrating indigenous knowledge systems and practices into development projects is argued in the third section that focuses on situating

indigenous knowledge in development practice and evaluates the application of indigenous knowledge in healthcare using the example of Burkina Faso.

### **The Development Debate**

The debate over the desirability of modern forms of development has been the object of extensive study in development theory by both those that support it and those that oppose it (Rabbani, 2011). The debate between advocates and critics of development revolve around the key question of why countries of the global South and most specifically Africa have not been able to develop and lift themselves out of poverty in the same way as countries of the West and those of East Asia. A wide range of scholarly works have been published by experts from different disciplines to explain the development dilemma and several debates have probed the most suitable solutions to the unending development challenges (Ashcroft, 2011; Murithi, 1997; Savage, 2013).

Development economics research has for the most part been preoccupied with trying to explain the causal reasons why some countries are rich and others not, why some countries, peoples and communities develop while others stagnate, and the structural factors that distinguish countries that enjoy high levels of development and those that still face astonishing levels of backwardness. Most importantly, development theory has placed emphasis on what can be done to strengthen the experience of the rich countries to alleviate the suffering of the poor (Barrett, 2008).

This debate dates back as far as the 1940s when it was essentially dominated by fierce exchanges between the modernization and dependency schools of thought. The 1950s saw the birth of decolonization in many third world countries, and these freshly decolonized territories embarked on a frenetic process of catching up with the levels of development enjoyed by the countries of the West. Development at this stage was viewed from a growth perspective and development efforts focused on achieving growth of the Gross National Product (GNP). The main idea behind this Western model of development was to reproduce the same economic prosperity found in the West in the freshly decolonized countries. The driving force behind this approach to development was the belief that such GNP growth would generate higher per capita incomes that would trickle down from the top to the bottom of the society for the mutual benefit of all (Ewane, 2004; Von Kimakowitz, 2012).

The Harrod-Domar growth model provided the normative background for the reliance on GNP growth as a means of achieving development, which dominated development thinking throughout the 1950s. The model that was developed by Sir Roy Harrod in 1939 and Evsey Domar in 1946 is a growth model that states that the rate of economic growth in a country is dependent on the level of savings and the capital output ratio. It posits that a high level of saving in a country provides funds for firms to borrow and invest. Investment can increase the capital stock of an economy and generate economic growth through the increase in production of goods and services. The Harrod-Domar model argues that governments of developing countries need to encourage saving and support technological advancements to decrease the economy's capital output ratio to attain economic growth (Solow, 1956). This model inspired other theorists to further conceptualize on growth as a means of achieving development in the poor countries. Theories such as the Big

Push, balanced growth, development growth poles and the stages of growth theory by W.W. Rostow were born out of this growth model.

The Big Push theory developed by Rosenstein-Rodan in 1943 mainly argues that a comprehensive investment package, or big push, is necessary to generate economic growth. It holds the view that a huge amount of resources must be attributed to economic programs for such programs to produce the desired results. In other words, economies of scale will be achieved in underdeveloped countries if so many mutually supporting industries, which depend on each other, are created. The theory believes that even the simplest activity requires a network of other activities, and that individual firms cannot organize such a large network, so the state or some other giant agency must step in. However, the big push came to grief in the 1970s and 1980s as evidence accumulated that, in Africa at least, public investment and foreign aid had produced no perceptible change in productivity, not the least because so much of it was stolen. Recently, though, the idea has come back into vogue. At the UN, discussions always focus on its millennium development goals, and some scholars argue that if public investment and foreign aid are big enough, they will boost household incomes, spur savings and boost local investment. They should also “crowd in” external investment by improving infrastructure (The Economist, 2011).

Nurkse’s theory of balanced growth published in 1953 was geared towards eliminating structural underdevelopment, especially as it sees limited market opportunities as being the impediment to development. The theory identifies the shortage of real capital as the main bottleneck in economic development, and it is both the starting point and end of a causal chain. It requests that governments must mobilize all potential sources of capital for investment to be made. Nurkse sees development as simply being an extension of the market and increase in production that includes agriculture. The theory assumes that there is the willingness and ability for rational investment decisions in a traditional society. His diagnosis of ‘underdevelopment’ and policy suggestions are strictly confined to economics. His opus has been attacked for neglecting non-economic factors in development, such as failure to consider capital formation in education, skills and health (Bass, 2009).

The development pole theory elaborated by Perroux in 1950 suggests that economic growth, interregional equilibrium and integration of underdeveloped regions could be achieved through a strategy of decentralized development. The underlying assumption here is that beneficial spread effects would be generated from the induced poles to their peripheral areas. Perroux argued that growth does not occur everywhere at the same time but in points or growth poles with variable intensities. It is therefore from the growth poles that development spreads along different channels and would have spillover effects for the whole country or region (Serra, 2003).

The main argument of Rostow’s theory of stages of growth is that economic growth is based around a relatively short period of two or three decades — when the economy and the society of which it is a part transform themselves in such ways that economic growth is, subsequently, more or less automatic (Rostow, 1956). The theory describes five stages through which all societies pass and analyzes the long-term processes of economic development from an economic history perspective. Rostow assumes that the traditional society has 75% of the population working

in food production, and political power is wielded by landowners or a central authority that is backed by the army and state bureaucracy. This theory came under criticism because of its inability to explain why some countries witness progress and others not. It is a highly ethnocentric theory that does not give room for alternative goals and processes of development.

The growth theories that dominated the development debate throughout the 1940s and the 1950s viewed human beings as simply beneficiaries of development rather than as active participants in the development process itself. They have been criticized for not considering the human beings as the goal of development. The growth theories were pervasive in their discourse, and some scholars have questioned the main epistemological foundations of development from an essentially growth perspective.

The 1960's saw a new dawn in the development debate as scholars became increasingly convinced that financial or capital injection alone was not sufficient to set the expected development in motion in the world's poor countries. There was a revolution in development thinking, and most scholars found the need to accompany growth with change. This decade saw the emergence of modernization theorists who believed that poor countries needed solid political systems and that Eurocentric and America-centric forms of development could be replicated in the poor countries of the global south.

Modernization theorists believe that endogenous factors such as the absence of communication and infrastructure, traditional agrarian structure, illiteracy, and low division of labor account for the high degree of backwardness in the poor countries. They treat the industrialized countries as a model for society and economy and argue that a change of these internal factors is an appropriate strategy for development. Poor societies therefore have to embrace the modernization of production as a means of knowledge transfer and capital aid to achieve industrialization. Development according to theorists of this school of thought is perceived as a rise in production and efficiency measured mainly by a comparison of GNP.

In the late 1960s, the basic claims of the traditional neoclassical approach that the poorer countries were late in embarking on solid economic practices, and that as soon as they adopted the techniques of modern economics then poverty would begin to decline in these countries came under serious attack from dependency theorists mainly from Latin America. Dependency theory argued that poverty resulted from capitalist exploitation, and it was a consequence of the international political economy and the inflexible division of labor that favor the rich countries at the detriment of the poorer countries. Scholars such as Raul Prebisch argued that economic growth in the advanced industrialized countries did not necessarily lead to growth in the poorer countries but rather generated severe economic difficulties in them.

Such economic problems were attributed to the fact that poor countries exported primary commodities to the rich countries that then transformed them into finished products and sold them back to the poor countries. The finished products from the industrialized countries always cost more than the raw materials that they obtained from the poor countries. Poor countries only serve as suppliers of cheap minerals, agricultural commodities, and cheap labor as well as the repositories of surplus capital, obsolescent technologies, and manufactured goods. Dependency

theorists recommended that poor countries should embark on importing substitutions so to avoid buying expensive products from the advanced industrial nations. The dependency is built on the assumption that political and economic power are heavily concentrated and centralized in the rich countries.

Poor countries were integrated into international political economy under harsh terms as they tried to replicate the West and accept the growth prescriptions of Western economists. This resulted largely from the colonial heritage which was further exacerbated by the fact that the elites in the poor countries benefited strongly from their role as suppliers of primary goods to developed countries. Wallerstein's world system theory captures this core-periphery relationship succinctly whereby the industrialized countries constitute the core while the poorer countries were considered as the periphery. The core experienced rising levels of prosperity while the periphery served to satisfy the needs of the core (Von Kimakowitz, 2012).

The debate in the 1980s was dominated by the neoliberal doctrine that was championed by the Bretton Woods institutions with the expressed support of the highly industrialized nations. The neoliberal development thinking was initially conceived to be applied in the rich countries of the West. The neoliberal theory suggests that the market is more efficient than the state and would produce better outcomes, and therefore, the state should not intervene. The neoliberal thinking was based on the belief that unemployment was the product of the absence of flexibility in the labor market and suggested that states should embark on legislative reforms and not try to create jobs through management and industrial policy in order to increase labor market flexibility. Accordingly, states needed to rely on monetary policy rather than using fiscal policy to resolve problems of unemployment and to promote growth. It further suggested that states should deregulate and liberalize markets so that investors can hope to achieve the highest profits (Von Kimakowitz, 2012).

Neoliberalism was a political economy theory that was mainly driven by the belief that mankind can achieve better welfare by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade (Harvey, 2005). In the 1980s, the poorest countries, especially those in Africa, faced deep-seated economic problems and started experiencing structural problems. Faced with these difficulties, African states started seeking financial support from the World Bank, IMF and the EU. Neoliberal policies then began to be imposed on the poor countries around the world, especially as the industrialized countries became the main capital owners at the IMF and World Bank.

These policies are set by the Washington Consensus, which is a set of 10 free market economic ideas that emphasize the importance of macroeconomic stability and integration into the international economy and expansion of market forces within the domestic economy. In other words, a neo-liberal view of globalization or market fundamentalism. The 10 policy instruments included:

1. Low government borrowing to avoid large fiscal deficits relative to GDP;
2. Redirection of public spending from subsidies (especially indiscriminate subsidies) toward a broad-based provision of key pro-growth, pro-poor services like primary education, primary health care and infrastructure investment;
3. Tax reform, broadening the tax base and adopting moderate marginal tax rates;
4. Interest rates that are market determined and positive (but moderate) in real terms;
5. Competitive exchange rates;
6. Trade liberalization of imports, with an emphasis on elimination of quantitative restrictions (licensing, etc.) with any trade protection to be provided by low and relatively uniform tariffs;
7. Liberalization of inward foreign direct investment;
8. Privatization of state enterprises;
9. Deregulation or abolition of regulations that impede market entry or restrict competition, except for those justified for safety, environmental and consumer protection grounds, and prudential oversight of financial institutions;
10. Legal security for property rights.

The 10 points of the Washington Consensus were imposed as conditionality by the Bretton Wood institutions and other multilateral donors on the recipient poor countries. The Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) were designed with the aim of combating ever-rising inflation and achieving favorable balance of payments for the poorest economies especially African economies. The World Bank did not require poor countries to try to act directly on the balance of payments as this would be very difficult, but African countries were required to act directly on monetary and fiscal policies that they could control. It was hoped that through these conditions, reduced inflation would increase investment that was necessary for economic recovery in Africa. Governments were required to cut spending, liberalize domestic markets, reform their tax systems and reduce trade barriers (Ewane, 2004; Siebold, 1996).

The IMF stabilization policies that focused on restoring the external sector balances failed to produce the expected effect in most countries that implemented them, and this approach to prosperity came under serious attacks from multilateral bodies such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECCLAC), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Inflation remained high and poverty levels rose in most of Latin America and Africa. Many African countries never experienced measurable progress years after implementing the SAPs, rather most of them entered a period of decline and experienced unfavorable trade balances (Ogbonna, 2012).

Since the early 1990s, the IMF and World Bank have been recommending good governance in all aspects of public life in the poor countries as a condition for aid. The main idea has been to enhance transparency in policy decisions and improve accountability on the use of public finances and procedures. Poor states have since been compelled to shape their national



policies to create policy and institutional landscapes that will facilitate their integration into the global market.

The current development debate adopts a human rights-based approach to development that seeks to empower both the beneficiaries of development while, at the same time, making them participants in the development process. The right to development (RTD) requires greater accountability from all actors in the development process: through legal, administrative, or political mechanisms, individuals, as right-holders, can make claims on the conduct of individual and collective agents, including states, which, as duty-holders, can be held responsible for not meeting their obligations. The RTD was first proclaimed by the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU) and was included in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in 1981. In 1986, the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (DRTD) was adopted and was later reaffirmed in the 1993 Vienna and 2000 UN Millennium Declarations (Piron, 2002).

The debate on the RTD was highly politicized between the poor and the rich countries. Most of the agreements reached in the various development fora have not always been replicated by the Commission on Human Rights. The Independent Expert on the Right to Development has made positive contributions to the debate by proposing a development compact that may lead to a politically acceptable solution. The 'compact' may need to be further defined in a manner consistent with current best practice or presented as a theoretical framework to guide real partnership agreements. The most controversial element of the RTD lies in the international implementation of the right. In the past, it was seen by some as giving rise to an obligation of developed states and international organizations to provide development assistance to developing states. However, such a human rights obligation of a legally binding nature cannot be grounded in international law. The current controversy surrounds the process of globalization, the equal participation of developing countries in that process, and its relation to human rights (Piron, 2002).

The human rights-based approach to development overlaps with the question concerning local ownership of the process of development. Local ownership to development involves the use of indigenous knowledge of the people in the communities where development projects are taking place. This process emphasizes local ownership as a critical component for achieving development in the world's poorest countries. It builds on the argument that a more localized development practice where people have a stake empowers the people and gives them a sense of belongingness rather than disconnecting them from the process of development (The World Bank, 2004).

The debate as elaborated above has completely ignored African indigenous knowledge in the search for solutions to the continent's seemingly intractable development challenges. However, more and more scholars are recognizing today that rural people have always maintained a certain formidable power that guides their indigenous institutions and knowledge systems thereby maintaining some level of reliance (Donnelly-Roark, 2004). Therefore, the disposition of the donor community to regularize indigenous knowledge in the form of inclusion of local voices and priorities (Briggs and Sharp, 2004) into development projects emanates in the power relations between indigenous and donor participation in the development practice. In contrast to the past where indigenous knowledge was an obstacle to development, it is now seen as pivotal to achieving

development in Africa ((Briggs & Sharp, 2004). To expatiate the perspective of indigenous knowledge as a cultural capital that conditions development thinking, planning and delivery, we provide an analysis of the theory of habitus in the next section to provide a foundation for the subsequent section on situating indigenous knowledge in development practice.

### **Bourdieu's Concept of Habitus**

The concept of "habitus" was developed within Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice. In the *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, he draws our attention to the social conditions of scientific practice by developing a theory that, on the one hand, critiques the foundation of social science and on the other hand, accounts for a theory of practice that argues that there exists relatively autonomous structured fields, which have a structuring capacity and function in accordance with rigorous mechanism of cultural and social reproduction which is capable of imposing their necessity on agents (Bourdieu, 1977).

The autonomous structured field is described as the *doxa* (or the field) in which agents tacitly accord by the mere fact of acting in accordance with social convention. These, in Bourdieu's understanding, are the always existing obligatory boundaries of experiential context that are "a relational obligation endowed with a specific gravity which it imposes on all the objects and agents which enter it" (Bourdieu in Adams, 2006, p. 514). The acting in accord with social convention is the habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). The habitus, in this respect, emerges from explicit action of inculcation producing a system of rules such as grammars and rhetoric, and defines the right ways to put the rules into practices as *repertoire* of devices or techniques. Adams (2006) notes that the field instantiates us as subjects and reproduces social distinctions via the enactment of habitus.

The concept of habitus was formulated by Bourdieu to overcome the pernicious dualism between objectivism and subjectivity, exemplified in France by Levi-Strauss and Sartre (King, 2000; Lau, 2004; Asimaki & Koustourakis, 2014). For Bourdieu, the concept captures and encapsulates the dialectics of objectivism and subjectivism by inscribing subjective, bodily actions with objective social forces so that the most apparent subjective individual acts take on social meaning (King, 2000). The habitus is thus internalized history and a 'structure' 'structured' by conditions of the relevant social (class, group, institutional) milieu (Lau, 2004). The concept is built on Bourdieu's objectivist perspective which specifies the mechanism that links structural conditioning to social practice and regularities (Lau, 2004). It thus comprises two sides: as structured structure and as structuring structure.

In this regard, habitus emerges as a conceptual tool suitable for explaining actions within a social field where a dynamic interplay of struggles produces history (Chandler, 2013). Thus, agency and autonomy are incorporated in the concept of habitus through personal and collective accumulated history that imprints them as *pre-reflective* action-orientation (Adams, 2006). This generative capacity of habitus makes it function as both 'the structure of the field' and 'structured by the field' leading to enduring transferable patterns of the social world. In this usage, habitus is a collective practical sense of objective possibilities that force the shape of the field providing the

pattern through which thoughts and action are produced. Accordingly, Bourdieu submits that practices that are generated by habitus follow a practical logic of practice:

The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structure predisposed to functioning as structuring structures, that is as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcome without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 53).

The concept of habitus thus stresses that human action can be “coherent without springing from an intention of coherence and deliberate decision; adjusted to the future without being the product of a project of a plan” (Elder-Vass, 2007, p. 326). As the set of dispositions inculcate in each of us by the conditioning that follows from our social environment (Elder-Vass, 2007), it conceals in its function *symbolic power* and through its capacities ensures the reproduction of itself as a self-regulating system compelling a lasting relation of domination established in the system.

According to Lau, habitus emerges horizontally from its structural conditions; it is what it is because these conditions are what they are, and not vice versa (Lau, 2004). The objective and prior cultural and structural features of a society, which were referred to by Bourdieu as the *opus operatum*, meaning the work which has been done, are beyond humans while the *modus operandi* are the practical strategies which an individual adopts (King, 2000). In this regard, Bourdieu sees society not only as consisting of interactions between individuals, but also as dialectics between practice and structure (King, 2000). He therefore appeals to the concept of *habitus* according to which society consists of objective structure and determines — and isolated—individuals (King, 2000).

The suggestion that the *operation* of habitus is subconscious has been criticized by several scholars (Elder-Vass, 2007). Bourdieu (1977) constrains the role of conscious thought in human action by arguing that habitus acts within the agents as the organizing principle of their actions and that this *modus operandi* informing every thought and action reveals itself only in the *opus operatum*. In the operation, habitus is seen as possessing emergent causal mechanism irreducible to structural and individual manipulation. Elder-Vass (2007) noted that the omission of conscious thought from the development of our dispositions is untenable as a general claim since “Many (though certainly not all) of our dispositions seem to be *learned* quite consciously via explicit verbal instructions, rather than being absorbed and embodied subconsciously” (p. 327). Therefore, Bourdieu neglects the role of conscious thought in both the development and the operation of habitus (Elder-Vass, 2007). The concept was thus heavily criticized for offering less substance for comprehending the complexity that comprises individuality of the agent (Chandler, 2013; Elder-Vass, 2007).

King criticizes the concept of habitus as being incompatible with Bourdieu’s practical theory and slips back exactly into the kind of objectivism Bourdieu refutes (2000). According to

King, “much of what Bourdieu describes under the name of ‘practical theory’ and which he believes justified the concept of the habitus is, in fact, quite radically incompatible with habitus (King, 2000) because: one, it fails to provide an explanation of social change, and two, it reduces social reproduction to the mechanical imposition of prior social structure onto individuals thereby returning to the very systemic image of social life which Bourdieu initially rejected in his critique of the structuralist account of gift exchange. Therefore, critics of the concept have mainly argued that the notion of habitus does not resolve the subject-object dualism of social theory which Bourdieu intends to do, but, in fact, relapses against Bourdieu’s intention into the very objectivism which he rejects. Despite this, King noted that Bourdieu’s contribution to the agency-structure debate cannot be completely dismissed.

The importance of Bourdieu’s contribution to social theory has driven other commentators to argue that Bourdieu has gone a long way toward overcoming the dualism of structure and agency by presenting a genuine advance in social theory (Crossley, 2001; King, 2000). Chandler (2013) argues that the dynamism, or the potency for change and individuality, of the agent, saturated by cultural capital, derives from being built of an economy of interest working strategically *within* the agent, which is very similar to Bourdieu’s ‘economy of practices’ comprising various fields of struggle. In this regard, the principle of our action is naturally practically emergent from experience. Lau dispensed Bourdieu’s myriad description of the concept specifying three inter-linked components for it: belief-premises, perception-appreciation, and a descriptive and prescriptive practical sense of objective possibilities and of the forthcoming for its operationalization (Lau, 2004).

In this article, we follow Bourdieu’s conceptualization of habitus as a practical sense emergent from experience. The embedment of ‘local ownership’ in the structure of global development thinking, planning and delivery is analyzed as emergent in the habitual practices of a development project. In other words, the disposition to indigenous knowledge in development practice is an internalized understanding and experiences of the both of “donor- and “receiving-community” that have emerged from development practices. These practices evolve habitual through a complex renegotiation of relations between the “donor” and “receiving-community”, or to the agents, and leaves room for the transformation of both parties.

### **Situating Indigenous Knowledge in Development Practice in Africa**

*“Indigenous knowledge is an integral part of the culture and history of a local community. We need to learn from local communities to enrich the development process.”*

James D. Wolfensohn, World Bank President (In Gope et al., 2017)

This section firstly illustrates indigenous knowledge, being the idea of ‘local ownership’ in development, as a ‘cultural capital’ used for resisting wholesale imposition of development ideas. We argue that the elitist, top-down approach to development that relies on the application of modern science, technology and expert knowledge held outside Africa for the continent’s development is epistemologically flawed. African perspectives on development have been greatly

impacted by indigenous cultural traditions and the sense of place, and this makes it relevant for African development values to be invoked in the quest for finding a lasting solution to the continent's development crisis. This argument is inspired by the theory of habitus with the hope of generating objective possibilities to overcome the development insufficiencies experienced in most parts of Africa through the application of indigenous knowledge.

According to the World Bank (1998), there is no all-encompassing definition of indigenous knowledge systems. From a strictly Western perspective, the term indigenous is often associated with being primitive, wild and natural (Dei, 1999). Indigenous knowledge (IK) is the local knowledge – knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society (Zageye & Bambi, 2006). IK contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities (Warren, 1991). Indigenous knowledge can equally be defined as being the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems (Flavier, 1995).

Kok (2005) posits that knowledge systems generally are systems through which people make sense of and attach meaning to the world in which they live. These views and perceptions originate within a specific community or culture and are handed down from generation to generation, resulting in personal experiences and wisdom being transferred to younger people. These knowledge systems reflect the dynamic way in which the residents of a community come to understand themselves in relation to their natural environment, and how they organize that knowledge of flora, fauna, cultural beliefs and history to enhance their lives (Bray & Els, 2007).

According to Gorjestani (2004), indigenous knowledge is an essential element of the social capital of the poor and constitutes their main asset in their efforts to achieve control of their own lives. It forms the base of the knowledge system of any country and encompasses the skills, experiences and insights of people applied to maintain or improve their livelihoods (World Bank, 2004). For these reasons, the potential contribution of indigenous knowledge to locally managed, sustainable and cost-effective survival strategies should be promoted in the development process.

Generally, the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in development practice is based on the claim that the Western knowledge dominated scientific path for underdevelopment in non-Western societies has failed to achieve its claim of capability to deliver these countries from their development problems. We, therefore, see the need for local participation to help break the impasse. However, the persistence of an indigenous knowledge system itself can also be a reflection of its capacity in holistically resisting modernity. Its forcibility as a part of a covert response to the destabilizing flux of modernity is noted by Fanon (1963). Therefore, its invocation in development practice forges a corporeal disposition that makes up development practices. The appeal to indigenous knowledge in this regard is seen through the capacity to renew itself as one of the forces for achieving development in Africa.

The World Bank (1998) identifies three levels of relevance of indigenous knowledge that may be within the process of sustainable development: the first level is the local community where the bearers of such knowledge live and produce; second is the various development agents such as governments, donors, local leaders and private sector initiatives. These agents recognize indigenous knowledge, value it and appreciate it in their interaction with the local communities. However, before incorporating it in their approaches, they need to understand it and critically validate it against the usefulness for their intended objectives; third, the global knowledge level ensures that indigenous knowledge forms part of global knowledge and in this context, it has a value and relevance in itself. Accordingly, indigenous knowledge can be conserved, transferred, or adopted and adapted elsewhere.

The acceptance of African indigenous knowledge in development practice is an effort in the way of finding the most suitable approach to resolving Africa's enduring development challenges. In this process the indigenous knowledge asserts its relevance in an institutional configuration that tends to suppress it. Local knowledge acts as a force that determines how development is conducted in specific localities. In this regard, the assumption that Western knowledge provides the only route, i.e. as superior to other knowledge, to development is confronted by indigenous knowledge's determinative capacity. Die states that "indigenous knowledge, as local participation, is a resistance to historic and continuing dominance of Western practice of development" (2014, p. 16). Therefore, the force of indigenous knowledge creates a space for itself in the development field.

In this regard, the indigenous epistemic system and the Western model are seen as endowed with the same principle of achieving a satisfactory end whereby they are organized in relation to each other in the field of development. About 60% of the African population, for instance, lives in rural areas where they depend largely on their indigenous worldviews to solve problems that affect their wellbeing and social development (Shiza & Abdi, 2014). The contending issues are, however, whether African indigenous knowledge is transformational or whether modernity (Western knowledge) will consume it over time in the search for solutions to development challenges.

The choice of African indigenous knowledge derives from a strictly normative standpoint that inclusiveness of a decision-making process determined by the requirements of survival is conditional and self-defeating. The issue of development in Africa is one of survival, and therefore development policies must be conceived in a way that will not exclude the choices and knowledge of the Africans themselves. Dei (2014) maintains that a critique of the Western discursive approach to African development should be pursued as an anti-colonial and anti-racist intellectuality to reclaim and recover indigenous knowledge.

For some scholars the focus on indigenous knowledge has been in answering the question related to whether African countries should establish endogenous localized political systems and structures to form centralized and powerful governments that contribute to promoting economic prosperity, improved living conditions, transparent parliamentary systems and social stability based on the Western political ideology (Liu, 2013). Research has equally devoted attention to the question of whether it is necessary to establish a powerful government that can effectively channel

national resources in joint efforts to achieve the state's long-term development goals, or to establish a weak government that only pursues its own immediate interests or partial interests and thus, leads to continuous mutually exclusive cut-throat competition.

We explore the role of indigenous knowledge in health care in Burkina Faso to elaborate its relevance as a valuable and inevitable resource in Africa's development process while at the same time show how this resource can be exploited to help people on the continent take control of their own lives. This presents a counter-hegemonic perspective of indigenous knowledge whereby development can best be understood and achieved if the indigenous people are encouraged to drive their development process by focusing on reinforcing their indigenous epistemic systems. Our choice of the healthcare sector derives from the fact that the development discourse has for too long focused on achieving economic prosperity while paying little attention to social development. We argue that the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in social projects will greatly increase the possibility of such projects to impact positively on the lives of the poor masses in Africa. This is particularly true because most of Africa's population live in the rural areas and most of them depend on indigenous knowledge to obtain a means of livelihood.

### **Indigenous Knowledge and Healthcare**

Scientific innovation and technological advancement in medical research have led to a remarkable increase in life expectancy, eradication of some diseases and a significant drop in mortality around the world. These developments notwithstanding, a large portion of the world's people still do not have access to essential drugs. In areas where modern medicine is not readily available, the people resort to the use of traditional medicine which is easy to find at affordable costs. Almost 80% of Africa's people do not have access to regular medicine and resort to the use of traditional medicine for their medical needs. It was in recognition of this fact that the World Health Organization in 2000 adopted the resolution on "Promoting the Role of Traditional Medicine in the Health System: A Strategy for the African Region" (Xiaorui, 2004).

Most of the plants used in traditional medicine have great biological and therapeutic potential and can be used in the treatment of common diseases such as coughs, diarrhea and fever. Considering this, the value added of traditional medicine development strategies should focus on promoting the growth of this local knowledge and enhancing consultation with indigenous practitioners to facilitate the treatment of some diseases (An, 2004). However, this knowledge is often exploited by big capital wielding pharmaceutical companies who patent the products.

In Burkina Faso, the government has taken measures to exploit and develop indigenous medicine as a means of improving healthcare delivery in the country. The Ministry of Health has created a Department of Pharmaceutical Services and Traditional Pharmacopoeia in order to establish a policy for developing a traditional medicine pharmacopoeia throughout the country. The first decision by the department was to develop traditional pharmacopoeia at the regional level that met regularly to exchange experiences gained in the field. Traditional therapist and herbalist organizations have been established in major cities around the country and regulations have been put in place to supervise the practice of traditional medicine in Burkina Faso. The country that is

also heavily afflicted by the AIDS epidemic is using traditional pharmacopoeia as a substitute of the expensive antiretroviral drugs in the fight against the disease. The government is helping to develop traditional medicine as a necessary supplement to the existing medical care provided for all segments of society by the medical centres of the country (Dakuyo, 2004).

The example of Burkina Faso is a clear indication that indigenous knowledge is essential to economic growth and must be an integral part of Africa's development process. The use of traditional pharmacopoeia and the creation of support networks for traditional healers are contributing to the effectiveness and sustainability of the country's healthcare system. These kinds of indigenous knowledge practices can be integrated in many other sectors in order to boost the continent's prospects of achieving prosperity without having to rely on knowledge held elsewhere. The experience of Burkina Faso is testimony to the fact that indigenous knowledge represents a precious, invisible link between regions and cultures, its resources and the store of experiences nurtured by the specialists in the community (Ndenecho, 2011). The knowledge held by these traditional or native healers represent what Bourdieu (1994) refers to as cultural capital which can exist in three forms: incorporated form, objectified state and institutionalized form.

However, reliance on indigenous knowledge in the health sector is not without challenges. One of the greatest challenges is that indigenous knowledge in Burkina Faso, like in most parts of the continent, is still greatly influenced by rituals and customary practices, some of which are gradually disappearing. More so, the high rates of illiteracy in some countries on the continent could result in most work based on indigenous knowledge not being accessed by the local populations, and thus leading to the researchers knowing more than the local populations. Burkina Faso, as well as many other African countries, is facing rapid biodiversity loss, and this might result in practices and knowledge related to fauna or flora being lost. To effectively address such threats to indigenous knowledge, African states would need to enact stringent measures that aim to protect natural habitats and ecosystems in order to guarantee continuous access to scientific knowledge.

The preference of the dominant modern Western systems of learning and scientific investigation is rapidly destroying these indigenous knowledge systems, especially in the healthcare sector in Africa (Gareth, 2000). It is imperative to incorporate African traditional medicine (social capital) into the formal healthcare systems of African countries. This can be achieved through ethnopharmacology, which can help identify indigenous medicinal plants that are safe and effective. However, this would require that Western donors or pharmaceutical companies respect the intellectual property rights of the traditional healers. In line with the theory of habitus, modern medical technology can serve to describe, analyze, validate and classify the native beliefs and processes of the traditional knowledge systems. Gareth (2000) argues that such validation using new techniques would help to confirm the difficult process of observation, analysis, and evaluation that determines every individual's culture. The validation may also represent the basic point of reference in the process of exchange between the donors' modern medicine and the local African traditional doctor (Neba, 2011).



## Conclusion

The indigenous knowledge underpinning of resistance to dominating Western knowledge has been argued through its persistence in development practice. Its persistence evolved habitually through a complex renegotiation of power relations between the donor- and receiving-community, which leaves room for the transformation of development space. In the struggle to resolve the enduring puzzle of development in Africa, the role of indigenous knowledge is thus affirmed as important. We argue that the importance of indigenous knowledge in development practice is in its capacity to generate transferable local skills and set energies in motion to reduce the prevailing inequalities on the continent. Therefore, the article advocates for a paradigm shift in development thinking and practice that reinforces the use of indigenous knowledge as a first line of action in the process of development.

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# **Breaking the Poverty Trap in Africa: A Comparative Perspective on Poverty Alleviation**

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## **Abstract**

An increasing number of African countries have recently registered improved rates of economic growth. Translating economic growth into poverty reduction, however, requires putting into place policies and institutions that promote a sustainable and shared economic growth process. The degree of success in poverty reduction depends largely on balancing the process of economic growth and the judicious pattern of income distribution so that an increasing share of the population benefits from the growth process and engages in more productive endeavors. Building the necessary policy and institutional framework to promote sustainable and shared economic growth is central in breaking the poverty trap and in initiating sustainable economic development. This article develops a political economy argument and demonstrates how successful poverty reduction are closely linked with pursuing economic policies that engage in increasing a segment of economic agents and develop the essential institutional arrangements to initiate sustainable economic development.

## **Introduction**

African countries have exhibited relative improvement in their economic growth in the new millennium. Sub-Sahara African economies have registered on average a 2.29 percent annual growth rate in real per capita income from the year 2000 to 2015. Given the average growth rate of their population at a rate of about 2.699 per annum during this period, the overall economic performance has been relatively robust. This is an important improvement compared to the long stagnation that economies in the region exhibited from the mid-1970s to the end of the 1990s. During this period, the economies in the region on average grew less than the growth of their population leading to a reduction in their real per capita income for an extended period of time with considerable cost to Africans and their hope of breaking the poverty trap.

Robust economic growth, however, is not new to African countries. Africa registered rapid economic growth during the 1960s but that initial push for sustainable growth and improvement in standard of living became no longer possible once economic policy mismanagement set in and the commodity price boom was busted (Van de Walle, 2001). In reality, the post-1960 average per capita economic growth rate of Africa was about 0.79 percent whereas the population growth was stable and held fast at an average rate of 2.69 percent per annum (World Bank, 2017).

The overall economic growth performance of the region in the post-independence period has been so moderate that it is not yet clear if the recent relative improvement is a new trend or a temporary recovery from the long recession of the economies in the region. Have African economies learned the appropriate lesson from their past experiences as well as lessons from other

developing countries outside the continent to sustain their economic growth and more importantly to convert that growth into a steady reduction in poverty across the continent? These are some of the central issues that call for a critical and in-depth analysis of the current economic performance of Africa, and the efforts to break the vicious circle of chronic poverty and destitution across the continent.

The source of such economic growth, sustainability as well as differences across countries, are features that need further elaboration and systematic analysis of what factors should be emphasized in an effort to translate economic growth into sustainable development and poverty reduction. In light of the experiences of such economies in economic stagnation, demographic pressures, and worsening poverty situation, the recent performances are indeed remarkable in their magnitude as well as spread across countries. Whereas overall average economic growth performance has exhibited significant improvement, translating economic growth into steady improvement in the standard of living is the most challenging and often unachieved objective in a number of countries. Whereas the countries in the region registered better economic growth, this record should be contextualized in that the growth rate occurred from a distressingly low level of income. Despite the recent growth rate, the average real per capita income in sub-Saharan African countries is estimated at just \$1,652 in 2015 as compared to \$1,072 in 1960 measured in terms of the 2010 constant international dollar (World Bank, 2017). Overall, the observation of real income per capita over a longer span of time across African countries does not leave much room for optimism yet. As Figure 1 below graphically depicts, the most consistent and stable growth rate in the continent has been population growth and the economies struggle to stay barely above the forces of demography.

Economic recovery and growth provides economies new opportunities to restructure their economies and identify pathways that could lead to sustainable economic performance. If the recent economic recovery can be capitalized upon and national economies earnestly address structural bottlenecks and institutional and policy rigidities in sustaining the growth performance of their economic agents, they could create new momentum that could ensure sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. The central policy issue is that given the current economic growth performance of most of the African countries, do they have the policy and institutional capacity to translate their economic growth into a sustained reduction in poverty? If not, what can be done about it? Breaking the low-level-equilibrium poverty trap requires both initiating and sustaining robust economic growth, raising the average income well beyond the subsistence level, and translating such dynamism into steady job creation, structural transformation, and reduction as well as eventual elimination of chronic poverty.

The overall improvement in the economic growth performance is a wider phenomenon and observed in diverse settings and situations across the developing world. African countries, as well as the wider family of developing countries, have improved their economic growth performance. Translating the improved overall economic growth performance into a steady reduction of chronic poverty across African countries requires putting in place institutions and policies that provide equitable opportunities to all the population and enabling economic agents to accumulate essential

human and investment capital. This leads to sustained improvement in their productivity and sets the stage for further reduction or even elimination of chronic poverty. For the first time in its history, Africa now has more non-poor than poor populations with an emerging middle class that has significant potential power to transform the continental economy (Moges, 2014). This has tremendous implications for the prospects of African economies and the life of Africans in the coming decades.

Poverty reduction is the outcome of both growth and income distribution processes and these elements are closely linked with the pattern of economic growth. It is therefore critically important to understand the process and forces that give rise to a persistent decline in poverty across countries and draw policy lessons that would help to promote the capacity of national economies to further address the remaining poverty and inequality challenges. A number of African countries have exhibited a unique pattern where both the share and the number of poor people first increased and only recently have both started to follow a downward trend. A closer examination of the poverty indicators across African countries strongly suggests that the performance of countries in terms of addressing chronic poverty is not amenable to generalization, and there are both success as well as failure stories. Whereas the number of countries that have managed to reduce the poverty rate has been increasing, there are dominant cases with high concentrations of poverty and population that exert significant influence on the overall poverty situation in the continent. Despite the improved situation and performance of African countries, for the countries under our consideration and for which comparable data is available, the total number of poor people has increased by about 64 million since the turn of the millennium.

These features suggest that the process of poverty reduction exhibits unique characteristics, and that subsequent efforts to eliminate poverty should take into account these forces so as to enable the majority of the population to escape the poverty trap and achieve sustainable improvement in their standard of living. The inspiration of this article emerges from the unique and historic possibility that chronic poverty as we know it could be eliminated within a foreseeable future provided that African countries, which are the weakest spots in this effort, could draw practical lessons from other developing countries and coordinate their efforts to break away from the poverty trap.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the recent trends in the extent of poverty reduction across African countries, highlight the pattern and features of the poverty reduction process, and draw policy lessons for further poverty reduction efforts. To accomplish this purpose, we have made use of a unique set of new and revised poverty and inequality data across African countries for which consistent and reliable data could be found. The study focuses on the period since the year 2000 during which poverty reduction policies took center stage in a new political-economy and global policy environment. We identified the effort and achievement of developing countries in terms of promoting economic growth, breaking away from economic stagnation, responding in terms of the pattern of income distribution, and interacting to both growth and distributional forces in shaping the outcome in the incidence of poverty across countries.

Success in poverty reduction is contextually defined in terms of sustained reduction in the

share of the population of the countries under consideration that live on less than USD \$1.90 per day chronic poverty line. An economy is considered successful in dealing with chronic poverty if it has managed to reduce their poverty index consistently below the 5 percent threshold and has set the stage for sustained poverty alleviation.

The paper contributes both to the theory of poverty analysis and the practical issues of development policy in the context of African countries and addresses the nexus between economic growth, income distribution issues, and poverty. A systemic analysis of the challenges and achievements in terms of poverty reduction provides a new insight into effective approaches, policy choices, and prospects in promoting sustainable and equitable economic growth that have a significant effect on the standard of living of the population and in terms of reducing the scope and depth of chronic poverty.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The next section develops conceptual arguments and deals with issues of poverty and the poverty reduction policy framework. Section three explores the argument in a broader analytical framework that attempts to link poverty reduction with growth performance with income distribution. Section four provides the evidence regarding the achievement in poverty reduction and its underlying forces. The paper concludes by drawing relevant policy lessons for countries where chronic poverty is still a formidable challenge.

### **Poverty: Conceptual Context and Measurement Challenges**

Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept and as such requires a comprehensive policy approach to deal with it. Chronic poverty refers to the inability of households to provide sufficient subsistence and to lead a decent economic and social life. It is a pronounced and extensive deprivation in well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

From the conceptual perspective and current common perception, poverty and by implication, the policy of poverty alleviation have ambiguous and imprecise meanings (Chen and Ravallion, 2010; Deaton, 2005; Kanbur, 2005; Moges, 2013b, 2013c; Ravallion, et al. 2009; World Bank, 2005). Whereas researchers have widened the conceptual framework and context of poverty from consumption expenditure, capability, and freedom perspectives, the difficulty and inaccessibility of precise measurement of such concepts have led to the alternative focus on a narrow but more pragmatic identification of poverty indicators for public policy response purposes. This approach has limitations in understanding the full extent of the challenges individuals and families in the situation of the poverty trap face. This situation is not only related to material deprivation but overall lack of capability to change their situation. Breaking the impasse requires empowerment of the poor to address their situation coupled with effective intervention by the government sector or even external forces that have vested and rational interest in breaking the trap and making the escape permanent.

A poverty reduction policy involves measuring accurately the income of households relative to a reference poverty yardstick, counting the number of poor people, putting this figure in relation to the entire population, and characterizing the nature, underlying causes, and dynamics of their poverty. Each step is a difficult task and require considerable resources. Moreover, the

lack of precision makes the concept vulnerable to political yard sticking in which actual poverty problems are not directly addressed or addressed obliquely (Deaton, 2005; Kanbur, 2005; Easterly, 2009; Jones, 2004). The headcount poverty index, for instance, could be reduced without necessarily reducing the absolute number of people in chronic poverty. This is particularly relevant in countries where population growth is fast, life expectancy is short and more children are born into poverty than those born in non-poor families. Moreover, who is poor and who is not largely depends on the poverty threshold the country adopts and when this yardstick is not realistic enough, the resultant poverty indicators would be misleading. Even when the benchmark yardstick is realistic enough, the poor are not homogenous. There is diversity within the ranks of the poor, and a concept of poverty would be partial if it fails to capture these essential features and develop ways to address them accordingly.

The conceptual context of chronic poverty is relevant especially in the poorest regions of the world as the situation might also involve generalized poverty where economies are simply not able to produce sufficient goods and services for the subsistence necessities of their population. It is important to note that the concept of poverty reduction might involve inter-temporal fallacy in that the poverty reduction strategy might become the victim of its own success. If one assumes that public policies reflect the will of the majority, at least in a democratic political setting, decline in the poverty index reduces the incentive for public policies to emphasize on further reduction measures especially when such measures are financed by contributions from the non-poor segments of the population or involve redistributive fiscal policy measures (Moges, 2013a). It is also realistic to acknowledge that not everybody has a vested interest in the elimination of poverty. As much as most of us want to overcome the humiliation that foreign aid and alms bring in the name of helping the poor, it is necessary to recognize the fierce resistance the powerful aid industry poses for radical changes in how countries implement anti-poverty measures.

It therefore becomes important to develop poverty elimination strategies that appeal both to the poor and the non-poor in society, empower the poor to make choices that affect their life, recognize the potential resistance that could emerge from vested interest groups, and mobilize support from a wide base while emphasizing the idea that eliminating chronic poverty is to the vested economic, social and political interest of the whole population of a nation. It is only under such comprehensive and broad based support that African countries can mobilize the necessary political, social, and economic resources to break the poverty trap once and for all.

The issues of poverty reduction could also be analyzed from the perspective of the process of economic growth and distribution of economic opportunities across economic agents and households. The level of poverty, as well as growth of mean income relative to the poverty line, is an important factor in reducing poverty. An economy might find itself in a situation of generalized poverty where aggregate output is not big enough to provide a decent living standard for all. In such a situation, average income falls short of the poverty line. This phenomenon emerges where economic agents and resources are underutilized, unemployed, underemployed or economic agents that do not have sufficient incentive, capital or technology to work for a number of institutional, policy, political, social and economic reasons. The first order of priority in such a situation is to



unburden economic agents from such constraints and develop strategies to eliminate structural bottlenecks for the realization of the economic potential of the country under consideration. This in turn requires a thorough examination of the economic, social, political and behavioral factors and the institutions that give rise to such under-capacity utilization of natural and human resources in the economy.

Even when an economy improves its productive capacity and its average income is higher than the absolute poverty line, output may not or cannot be equally distributed across households. This is true partly because inequality and its root causes extend beyond economic forces. Observation of cross-country patterns of income distribution suggests that even the most egalitarian societies have an index of inequality in the range of 0.20 to 0.25, whereas the most unequal economies register about 0.60 to 0.66 (Milanovic, 2005). The pattern of wealth distribution across households, despite the limitation of the quality of such data, is turned out to be even more extremely unequal (Davies et al., 2010). However, not all inequality in a system reflects injustice. When the rewards that economic agents receive are adjusted relative to their effort, dexterity, and creativity so they are fairly balanced, it maintains the incentives for higher efficiency and robust growth in national income.

Economic growth is indeed the most powerful instrument to reduce poverty provided that it creates employment opportunities to the poor, increases the demand for factors that the poor own, and creates the condition in which the poor develop the capability to accumulate productive assets that prepare them for a productive and better life (Dollar & Kraay, 2002; Kraay & Raddatz, 2007; Moges, 2013b). Economic growth has twin effects both of which have important effects on poverty indicators. From an analytical perspective, economic growth could imply an increase in the average income of all households without necessarily changing their relative income. There is also a distributional effect in which the growth process is accompanied by changes in the relative income with ambiguous effects on the poverty indicators (Bourguignon, 2003; Dollar & Kraay, 2002). Nonetheless, the growth process might exhibit anti-poor elements when economic agents are not positioned to equally participate in and benefit from the growth process due to constraints of human capital, access to financial services, a weak business and investment climate, weak institutions, and restrictive economic policies (Alesina & Rodrik, 1994; Persson & Tabellini, 1994).

Is economic growth distribution neutral? There are strong tendencies that cast doubt on the distributional neutrality of growth. The growth of income of a national economy does not benefit all economic agents equally for a host of reasons including differences in resource endowments; inputs in market imperfections, government policies, institutions, and social relationships. Economic growth benefits mostly those who have the capability to initiate growth, and it eventually reaches those economic agents who get employment opportunities and those who produce factor inputs in the production processes. This process is gradual and its flow does not necessarily involve a significant portion of the population. It is possible that economic growth could be driven by a sector that has very weak linkage with the rest of the economy and with inconsequential effect on employment generation. Such a growth process can give rise to

deterioration in the distribution of income and worsen the inequality situation leaving the majority of the population behind.

Poverty reduction could be achieved by the growth in the income of the poor or improvement in the distribution of income. These two features of the growth process and its implication on poverty indicators are an important analytical approach to decompose the relative importance of the growth and distribution components in the process of poverty reduction (Bourguignon, 2003). The relative importance of these forces influences the extent to which growth can be translated into poverty reduction on a sustainable basis. The dynamics of economic growth and its impact on the poverty situation in a country hence largely depends on the political economic forces that shape the nature and dynamics of the economic and socio-political forces within the country.

### **Analytical Framework for Poverty Analysis**

The level and change in the indicators of poverty of a country are closely linked to the degree to which economic agents utilize all of their economic resources in the system for the production of goods and services at a given state of technology. Productive efficiency and technological progress are engines of economic growth. Given the production process, the distribution of output across households involve political economic, market, demographic, and institutional forces. As such, the process of production and distribution of economic resources ultimately influence the prevalence and persistence of poverty in the system. From such a perspective, the stage of economic development as measured by per capita or per household income, the growth rate of the average income, pattern of income distribution, and population growth are the main forces that shape the level and changes in the indicators of poverty.

The measurement of poverty and its dynamics over time depends on computing the aggregate output of the nation and its growth rate, the distribution of income across households, the size and growth rate of the population, and a realistic poverty yardstick. These factors in isolation as well as in combination influence the level and dynamics of poverty of a nation over time and across households.

### **Poverty Indices**

The measurement of poverty as defined above could take various approaches and practical twists. The most commonly used approaches involve establishing a distribution function of the aggregate output of an economy, arranging the distribution of income or purchasing power with respect to the distribution of the population and with the help of a separately determined poverty line to divide the population into poor and non-poor classes. This process is conceptually simple but could be misleading unless it is used precisely and interpreted from the perspectives of distribution, dynamics, and responsiveness to policy initiatives.

Accurate measurement of poverty starts with a reliable measurement and ordering of income at the household level and national level as well as computing accurately the size and

growth of the population in a country. These features could be captured in a conceptual framework that reflects various perspectives of poverty.

Consider that the income or consumption expenditure level of a total of  $n$ -households in a nation is arranged in an ascending order and take the following notation:

$$\mathbf{y} = (y_1, y_2, \dots, y_d, \dots, y_m, \dots, y_n) \quad (1)$$

The aggregate value of income of households approximates the size of the national output that is available for consumption which closely approximates the disposable income in the national income computation plus public services and goods that household members receive from the government. Hence the aggregate size of output is critically important.

If the average income of a nation falls short of the threshold poverty line, by necessity, the majority of its population would be suffering from chronic and endemic poverty. This is a situation where the poverty threshold income level is higher than the average income of the entire economy,  $y_d > y_m$ . This is an exceptional situation of generalized poverty. It captures the central challenge of a failed system that could not generate enough goods and services to provide the necessities of economic life. As we will discuss this issue later on, a number of African countries currently find themselves in generalized poverty that describes a low-level-equilibrium-poverty trap. This is an equilibrium trap conditioned by institutional, political, demographic, environmental, and technological forces that reinforce each other for stability. Breaking such a stable equilibrium requires radical reforms that break the rigidities, constraints, and limitations on economic agents from making decisions and responding to incentives so as to engage in productive endeavors and earning in the process a decent standard of living.

It is only when the total output that the economy generates is large enough that sufficient resources can be available for addressing poverty objectives. Income per household hence measures what could be available, on average, for members of households and is measured by dividing national income by the total number of households,  $n$ . Income per capita, which depends on the average family household size, is equivalent to the aggregate output divided by the size of the national population. Note that the aggregate output is produced by a productively employed segment of the population and its productivity whereas this total output should support the consumption expenditure of the entire population. Therefore, the aggregate size of output and the total size of the population are two fundamental determinants of how many goods and services could be available on average for individuals to consume and invest for further production.

The average income is an important indicator in a sense that it shows the value of goods and services that a typical household and its members can command if income and consumption capabilities were fairly and equally distributed. However, income is rarely distributed equally across households or economic agents. Households and their members have inherent inequality in age, productive capacity, incentive to work, education, health, dexterity, and the like that are reflected partly on their capacity to earn income. The dispersion of household income relative to the average income captures the distribution of income. However, the extent of inequality is a matter of public concern, especially when differences in income do not reflect differences in productive attributes of households and their members. It is also possible that inequality might

have functional influences on the growth rate of income of households and hence the inter-temporal dynamics of income and poverty indicators.

The simplest and quite obvious indicator of inequality is the gap in income between the richest households and the poorest. In our ordered ranking of households by their income level, this is depicted by  $(y_n - y_1)$ . The relative concentration of households towards the highest, the middle, or the lowest on the income ladder generates the most obvious form of income and consumption expenditure gap in a country. This gap and its behavior over time would have important bearings on the relative poverty index.

There is a stylized tendency of economic resource distribution which suggests that households tend to concentrate nearer to the lowest income, somewhere below the average income level, giving the overall distribution of income a skewed structure. The level of income that most of the households generate and consume - the modal income - is a typical barometer of interest in economic analysis for it reflects the most representative feature of a household and its members. In this context, it is also relevant to take into consideration the magnitude of  $(y_d - y_l)$  which shows how much income of the poorest households fall below the poverty line. The smaller the gap the better, whereas a larger gap suggests more daunting challenges in addressing the problem especially if those falling below the poverty line constitute a higher share of the population.

The next issue of interest is related to the distribution of income of households relative to the average income of households. If we consider  $y_m$  in equation (1) above as the average income of households, the deviation of individual household income relative to the average indicates how income and expenditure capabilities are distributed across households.

Measuring income distribution and inequality is a notoriously difficult and inaccurate business. In practice, nations gather vital information on the distribution of income by conducting national household surveys on income or expenditures but for a long list of reasons such sample surveys fail to provide accurate indicators of the pattern of income distribution. Moreover, the surveys are conducted infrequently, and their outcomes largely deviate from national income accounting based estimates of aggregate output and income. It is therefore customary to rely on expenditure surveys to derive indicators of income distribution and inequality and rely more on national income accounts to gauge the level of national economic activity and growth rate.

Based on the level and distribution of aggregate output of a nation across the population, indicators of consumption deprivation are computed by applying a poverty threshold line. A class of poverty measures, following the general framework of the Watt index, were commonly used in poverty analysis (Foster et. al., 1984, Morduch, 1998). This class of poverty index summarizes the level of poverty and its extent for a given distribution of income and the poverty line and the corresponding average exit time to eliminate poverty from the system. It can be summarized as follows:

$$P_\alpha(y; z) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^d \left( \frac{z - y_i}{z} \right)^\alpha \quad (2)$$

Where  $P_\alpha$  ( $i = 0, 1, 2$ ) is the poverty index and is the function of income ( $y$ ) of poor households and the poverty line ( $z$ ). As indicated earlier, there are  $n$  households arranged in increasing order

from the lowest to the highest income per household, and household **d** has an income exactly equal to or below the poverty line.

$P_0$  is the indicator of the headcount poverty index (HPI), which measures the total number of people in households with an income below the poverty line expressed as a share of the total population in all households,  $N$ . Households and their members whose income falls short of the poverty line would constitute the poor.

This is useful and yet it is highly dependent on the choice of the poverty line yardstick that is used to designate households as poor or non-poor. The poverty line is drawn using a set of commodities that are dominantly used and affordable by poor households. However, one has to be aware of the problems of picking an arbitrary threshold for it may not realistically reflect the choices that are available for poor households to allocate their limited resources (Chen et al., 2010; Ravallion et al., 2009). Poverty involves lack of choice and vulnerability to different shocks that are outside the control of the members of the household. This is particularly the case in chronic poverty even if relative poverty also invokes a considerable lack of freedom of choice. The way the poverty threshold is chosen and determined affects the classification of households in the two broad categories of the poor and the non-poor. This could take quite an arbitrary bend if those near or above the threshold are still deprived of the basic necessities of life and choices that would make their status of non-poor almost trivial (Deaton, 2005).

There are two related measurement approaches of poverty that measure how poor households fall short of the poverty line - the poverty gap index ( $P_1$ ) - as a percentage of the poverty threshold level. This approach is sensitive to the distribution of income among the poor households for it measures the average deviation of income of poor households from the poverty line threshold. This suggests that anything that helps the poorest households relative to the rest would improve the overall extent of poverty. This might involve income transfers, welfare programs, or income boosting approaches that would benefit the poorest segments of the society. And yet it does not directly address the extent to which households with an income level higher than the poverty threshold would be vulnerable. This is quite an important concern particularly when the non-poor are concentrated just above the poverty line but not far enough to be comfortable about their current and future economic status.

Consider a family of four whose current consumption expenditure is such that they are considered a non-poor household, and yet they barely make it. If a child is born, the family size expands by 25 percent while income most likely remains somewhat the same at least in the short run. In such a case, the family may soon be in poverty unless it compensates its purchasing power with a corresponding rise in their real income.

These two concepts of poverty index, headcount poverty index and the poverty gap, are the most commonly used, popular, and relatively simple approaches to describe the absolute poverty of a nation.

The third concept is the measure of the severity of poverty which is the square of the poverty gap that attaches more weight for those households that fall far below the poverty line than those near the threshold line:

$$P_2(y; z) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^d \left( \frac{z - y_i}{z} \right)^2$$

However, its practical application in poverty analysis and policy has been marginal. In this study, we focus on the first concept and its implications in the analysis of poverty.

Growth in the average income of the poor and the aggregate economy without a corresponding deterioration in the pattern of income distribution generate the most promising path out of poverty. However, there are complex sets of issues that might hamper members of poor households from benefiting and contributing to the growth of income, productivity and employment in the economy. The capacity of an economy to address the challenges of poverty, hence, depends on how much it can mobilize and invest in the productive capacity of its population and generate employment opportunities to most of the economically active population and especially for those from the poorest segment of the population. The elimination of poverty apparently translates into pushing the average income of the poorest segments of households,  $y_1$  to  $y_d$ , beyond the poverty line,  $z$ . The process of shared economic growth would have the best chances of eliminating poverty on a sustainable manner, and yet in most cases, some form of social safety net would be necessary to ensure that all families enjoy the basic necessities of life.

Nonetheless, there are possibilities in which national economies find themselves where the poverty threshold line, defined within an acceptable level of bare necessities of life, might be higher than the average income of households ( $z > y_m$ ). This is a typical situation of generalized poverty where chronic poverty is widespread and almost every family is in a poverty trap. This situation calls for an entirely different approach in addressing the challenges of poverty and overall economic underdevelopment. Even in such a dire situation, there would be a minority of households that are rich and yet their relative prosperity would have limited impact on the overall poverty situation of the national economy. Apparently, income redistribution policies would have very limited influence on the dynamics of poverty in this situation since the overall population has an egalitarian distribution of deprivation and poverty for its citizens. The challenge for policy here is a radical and comprehensive reform that would change the very nature of how households and their family members engage in productive economic activities and benefit from their endeavors. It would take radical institutional, political, and social reforms that break away from the bottlenecks and bad institutions that have deprived the population from earning a decent economic life and participate productively in the economic activities of their country.

### Poverty Exit Time

The accurate conceptualization and measurement of poverty is the first step in dealing with poverty reduction efforts. The pace and extent of poverty reduction is dependent on a combination of factors that involve overall economic growth of the national economy, the growth rate of the average income of poor households, the distribution of income across households, the growth rate of family size across the income distribution pattern, and the extent to which vertical mobility is feasible for individuals from poor families to join the ranks of the non-poor.

The concept of poverty exit time is used to describe what it takes in terms of the growth rate of income for poor households to eliminate their income shortfall from the poverty line. Given the poverty gap, growth rate of income for the poor would translate into closing the income gap and joining the ranks of the non-poor. A concept of an average exit time that makes use of a modified version of the Watts measure, sensitive both to distribution of income and decomposable across subgroups of the population, is used for our analysis (Murdoch, 1998). The Watts index has a common notation of:

$$W = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^d [\ln(z) - \ln(y_i)] \quad (3)$$

where there are  $i$  individuals in the population indexed from 1 to  $N$  in increasing order of income and  $d$  captures the number of people with income  $y_i$  below the poverty line  $z$ .

To develop a measure that captures the expected time for a poor household to exit poverty if its income grows at an average rate of  $g$  per annum is depicted as the relationship between the current income of the household,  $y_i$ , and the target of the poverty threshold level,  $z$ . This could be depicted as follows:

$$z = y_i e^{(t_g^i g)} \quad (4)$$

Taking the logarithm on both sides of the equation and solving for  $t_g^i$  results in:

$$t_g^i = \frac{\ln(z) - \ln(y_i)}{g} \quad (5)$$

Given that there are  $d$  households with an income at or below the poverty line and  $(n-d)$  households with an income at least equal to the poverty line, the average exit time for households,  $T_g$ , is hence the average time for the entire population to eliminate poverty. It is given by:

$$T_g = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N t_g^i \quad (6)$$

Note the fact that out of these households,  $n-d$  households have zero exit time because they have already achieved the target level of the threshold income. Some households may be barely above the threshold, and yet, they and their family members would be included in the class of the non-poor. This would suggest that the effective average exit time is:

$$T_g = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^d \frac{[\ln(z) - \ln(y_i)]}{g} \quad (7)$$

This is closely related to a class of Watts index above in that:

$$T_g = \frac{W}{g} \quad (8)$$

The essential feature of this formulation is that provided that the income of the poor is assumed to grow at an average rate of  $g$  per annum, the short fall of income of the poor from the poverty line could be eliminated within a span of time that is equal to the total amount of the gap divided by the growth rate of income of the poor. Therefore, if there are policies that promote the growth of income of the poor, then the poverty in a nation could be reduced or eliminated within

a specific period of time. This perspective, of course, assumes that income among the poor could grow equally or that the poor have equal opportunities to improve their income. With this qualification, the exit time provides an important point of focus for poverty policy.

Regarding a closely related issue particularly in terms of mobilizing the necessary resources to address the problems of chronic poverty, it is important to estimate what would be the cost of such an objective relative to national income. Since we can estimate the average income shortfall of households below the poverty line, by aggregating the shortfall of the relative burden to the size of the national economy, we get:

$$P_{burden} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^d [\ln(z) - \ln(y_i)]}{GDP} \quad (9)$$

This estimate provides the cost burden to the national economy to eliminate poverty from the system, and it also serves as a yardstick by which households whose average income falls below the poverty line could be directly supported. The cost of such support could be unaffordable in economies where the majority of the households are poor, and the economy is rather weak. However, countries with an HPI within a range of 5-10 percent of their population should be able to mobilize the necessary funds domestically to absorb the financial burden of poverty alleviation measures.

### **Analysis of Poverty Reduction in African Countries**

The measurement of poverty and its dynamics over time depend on computing the aggregate output of the nation and its growth rate, the distribution of income across households, the size and growth rate of the population, and a realistic poverty yardstick. These factors in isolation as well as in combination influence the level and dynamics of poverty of a nation over time and across households.

Poverty has been deep and widespread across the developing countries of the world. This is the manifestation of both the low level of income and productivity of national economies as well as the inequitable access to productive opportunities and hence income. Low productivity and lack of access to educational and employment opportunities in more productive sectors have reduced the opportunities to realize the potentials of millions of poor people from earning decent living standards and escaping from the poverty trap. This has also deprived economies from benefitting from the potential productive contribution of poor people in improving the overall welfare of the total population.

Table 1 summarizes the regional poverty indicators across African regions and over time. It exhibits features that provide both the challenges and prospects of addressing poverty in the context of African countries. First, there is a continental trend which indicates that both the absolute number of poor and their share in the total population first rose and then started declining. The headcount index of poverty first increased from 56.75% in 1990 to about 57.1% in 2002 and then declined over the years to reach 40.99% in 2013. Second, chronic poverty is concentrated in some countries and regions within the African continent. Increasingly, East and West African



countries are where both economic and demographic forces are pushing up a higher concentration of poverty indicators. Third, despite the overall tendency, there are significant variations in terms of the scope and rate of poverty reduction across countries.

Table 1

*Poverty Indicators in Sub-Sahara Africa*

	1990		2002		2013	
	HPI (%)	Poor (mil.)	HPI (%)	Poor (mil.)	HPI (%)	Poor (mil.)
<b>Developing Countries</b>	42.01	1840.1	30.04	1588.12	12.55	766.01
Sub-Sahara Africa	54.28	276.08	55.58	391.28	40.99	388.72
East Africa	62.94	130.6	58.53	160.4	40.90	159.1
West Africa	56.34	101.4	59.28	147.0	43.19	145.6
Central Africa	56.46	39.5	67.38	68.7	54.46	75.3
Southern Africa	32.81	13.8	36.05	19.1	17.88	10.9

*Source:* World Bank, 2017. Poverty Database and World Development Indicators.

*Note:* HPI measures the share of the population with less than \$1.90 per day poverty line in terms of adjusted 2011 PPP. Author's computation on the basis of data source.

Fourth, the poverty reduction performance of countries has been highly influenced by demographic forces. Whereas the overall tendency of the demographic transition is manifest in several African countries, there are countries that face considerable demographic pressure. The demographic challenge expressed in terms of high and stable growth rate of the population has made the task of addressing poverty more daunting. Fifth, whereas the number of poor people has declined across the continent in recent years, there are more Africans in poverty now than in 1990. In total, there are still nearly 389 million Africans living in chronic poverty, which is about 113 million more poor people than in 1990. Sixth, whereas the successes in reducing the number of the poor and their share in the population is widespread across the continent, those countries that have failed to make a significant reduction in poverty are dominant in terms of population and economic size which increases their influence on the overall assessment of the poverty situation in the continent.

Understanding variation in terms of the poverty reduction process and drawing policy lessons for those countries and regions that still face considerable challenges in addressing the problems of chronic poverty requires examining the forces behind variations in performance. Figure 1 depicts the average growth performance of Sub-Sahara African countries since 1960. It is notable that not only has economic growth been modest, it also has been very erratic and unsteady over time. Growth in real per capita income is also constrained significantly by the steady and rapid population growth rate of the region. As the figure graphically depicts, it is the struggle between the growth efforts of the economies and the power of the demographic forces that have shaped how economies have managed to generate sustainable or weak economic growth over time.

It is indeed a big deal to cope with the growth of the population, and yet steady improvement in the standard of living necessitates the growth of economic activity faster and more steadily than population.

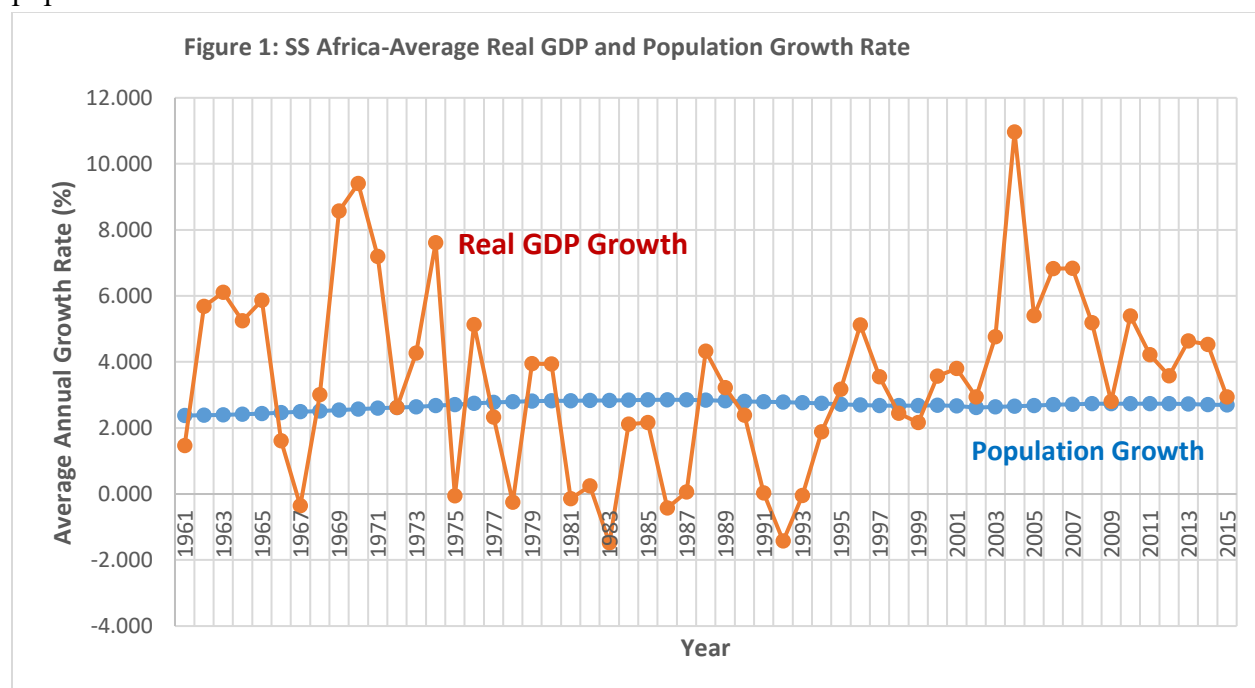


Figure 1. Sub Saharan Africa – Average real GDP and population growth rate.

Source: World Bank, 2018

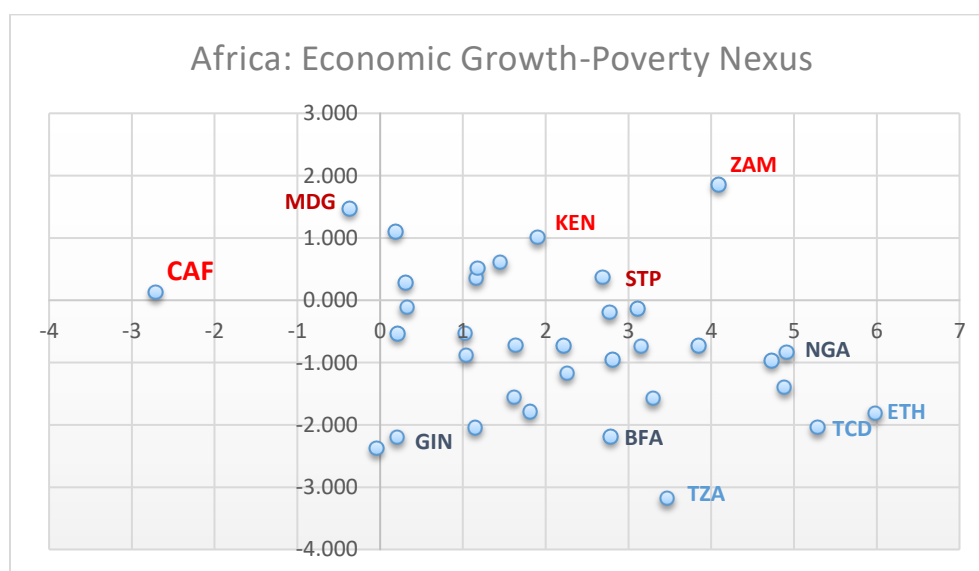


Figure 2. Africa: Economic Growth-Poverty Nexus

Figure 2 relates graphically the relative performance of 35 African countries for which comparable data could be secured both on poverty, growth rate in real income, and demographic indicators. The growth rate and poverty nexus reflect a clear tendency, and yet there are more

forces in operation that affect the degree of poverty reduction in the sample countries. Whereas economic growth remains the main force that enable countries to address the problems of chronic poverty on a sustainable basis, economic growth does not necessarily translate to poverty reduction. Economic growth is only a potential power that could be used for effective and sustained reduction in poverty.

It is evident that countries with robust economic growth have registered significant reduction in poverty. Countries with a fast growth rate in real per capita income on average managed to reduce the share of their population living in chronic poverty. On the other side, countries with contracting economies could not reduce poverty even in a seemingly egalitarian situation. It is also clear that countries in our sample are concentrated in the low-growth-low-poverty reduction loop. This suggests that without robust economic growth, economies find it very difficult to make a sustainable dent in chronic poverty.

A number of countries registered positive growth in average income and yet failed to translate that into tangible poverty reduction. This phenomenon tends to prevail in countries where growth is not shared broadly, and income distribution deteriorates. These features suggest that economic growth is necessary and critical for poverty reduction but without enabling a pattern of income distribution economic growth does not necessarily translate into steady poverty reduction.

Table 2 below summarizes the descriptive statistics of the data on variables under consideration in our sample of 35 African countries. The data reported here is only a conservative estimate of the problems of poverty and other attributes of life in Africa. Countries for which data is not available are usually with deeper poverty problems and failed economic growth. Whereas the 35 countries in the sample provide some picture of the situation in the sub-continent, the missing data is partly a symptom of deeper economic, political, and social problems.

*Table 2*

Sub-Sahara Africa- Descriptive Statistics on Poverty Indicators

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Change in HPI	35	-.6779	1.1791	-3.1783	1.8575
Population growth	35	2.5555	0.6698	0.9126	3.8022
GDPc growth	35	2.1256	1.8701	-2.7092	5.9836
Change in Incomeshare	35	-.4402	2.2846	-6.49	3.21
GDPc2000	35	854.47	1148.78	136.6	4854.5
HPI2000	35	53.51	20.62	19.64	91.21
Population 2000	35	16.692	23.791	.137164	122.87
Bottom40%share2000	35	26.298	2.955	17.53	30.88
Poor Population2000	35	9.696	15.507	.04047	78.026
Poor Population2012	35	11.52	18.323	.06315	94.896
Change in # Poor	35	1.825	4.558	-6.545	16.86

*Source:* World Bank. 2016. World Development Indicators and Poverty Database.

It is evident from the performance of the countries in the sample that overall poverty has declined by a modest rate, but intra-continental variations have been such that there is a net increase of about 113 million chronically poor people in the region since the year 2000. This is particularly true in countries where per capita income was extremely low to begin with, economic growth was modest, and population growth was fast. In the year 2000, for instance, only 10 out of the 35 countries in our sample had an income per capita higher than the poverty threshold level which suggests that technically, these countries were in generalized poverty. By the year 2012, the situation improved modestly so that 16 out of the 35 countries registered a level of per capita income beyond the threshold level of chronic poverty. In effect, more than half of the countries in the sample are still in generalized poverty, and under such a situation, sustainable poverty reduction would be practically impossible unless radical reforms are undertaken that break away from structural and systemic bottlenecks for economic activity and productivity of factors of production.

*Table 3*

SS Africa- Regression Result on Poverty Index 2000-2013

Variables	Coefficient	Std. Error	P-value	[95%Conf. Interval]	
GDPc growth rate	-0.1579	0.0864	0.077	-0.334	0.0183
Average change in Bottom 40% Income share	-0.2169	0.0716	0.005	-0.363	-0.0709
Population growth rate	0.2938	0.2036	0.159	-0.121	0.709
HPI 2000	-0.02286	0.008911	0.015	-0.041	-0.0047
Dependent Variable: Average annual change in HPI					
Observations: 35					
Adj. R-Squared= 0.4919					

Incorporating the different attributing factors in shaping the outcome in poverty indicators in the sample countries, Figure 3 portrays concisely the various channels by which progress in poverty reduction, as measured by change in the HPI, is influenced or related to the variables that are discussed in the conceptual framework section. Whereas economic growth is an important force that countries can use to address the problems of chronic poverty, the nature and inclusiveness of the growth process is found to be an important element in translating economic growth into robust poverty reduction.

This aspect of the growth process is closely linked with the pattern of income distribution and the extent to which the share of income goes to the relatively poor segment of the population. Even if there are various indicators of inequality and a pattern of income distribution, for the purpose of this research, we make use of the share of national income that goes to the bottom 40 percent of the income quintile. Economies that manage to improve a share of the bottom segment of the income distribution and hence enabling more and more of the population to benefit from the growth process have made significant strides in poverty alleviation efforts.

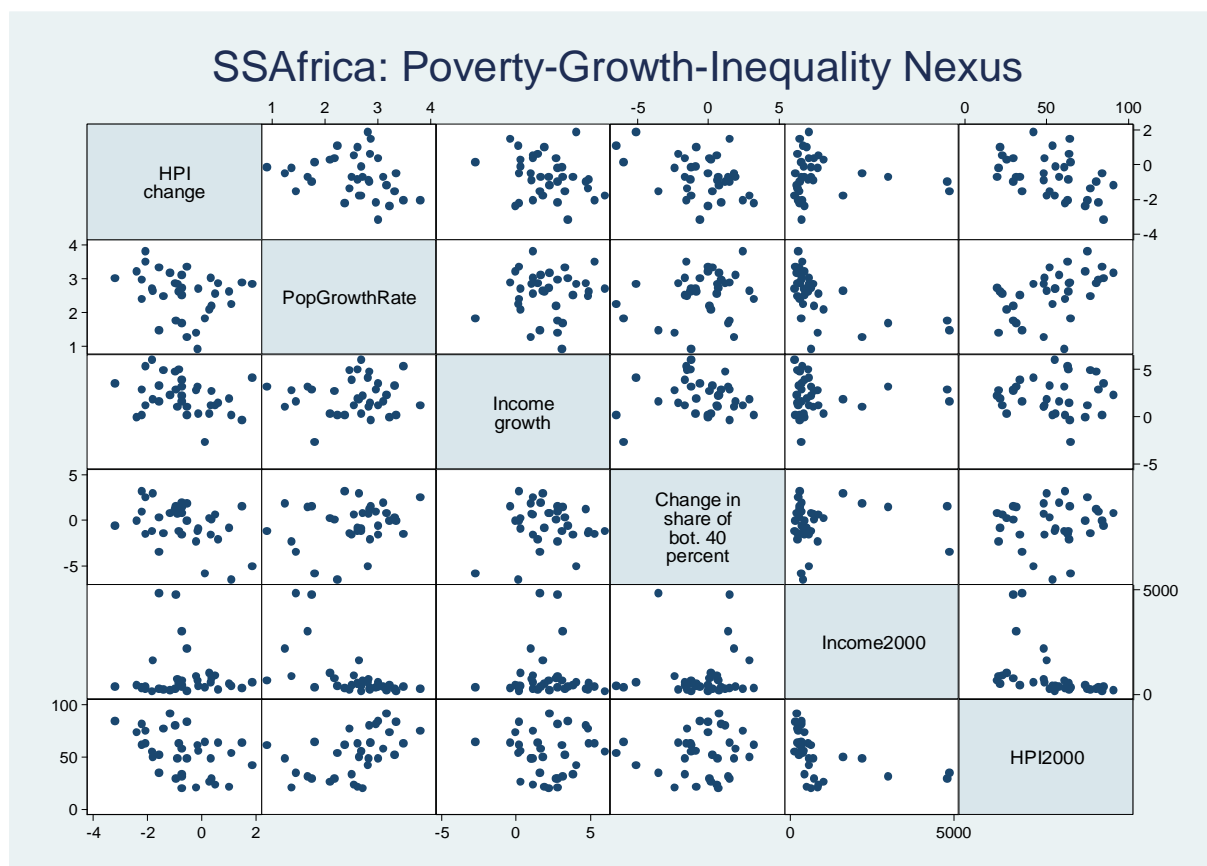


Figure 3. Spectrum of Influences in Poverty Reduction Process

It is clear from the cross-country observation that a number of countries failed to translate economic growth into poverty reduction because of a deteriorating pattern of income distribution that effectively excluded the poor from improved income. Such economies have also failed to reduce the poverty index on a consistent manner even though they had the opportunity and capacity to address the problems of poverty through their improved economic growth performance. Countries seem to find that changing the pattern of income distribution is very difficult to accomplish without undertaking fundamental changes in their political economy and institutional environment. This constraint, in turn, has influenced the extent to which countries can translate economic growth into a corresponding poverty alleviation outcome.

### Growth, Inequality, and Poverty Nexus

The situation and change in poverty indicators are highly influenced by the growth rate of national income and the pattern of income distribution which effectively determine who benefits from the growth process. Whereas economic growth is a necessary condition for sustainable reduction in poverty and improvement in standard of living, it is not a sufficient condition for such an outcome. It takes more than economic growth to bring about sustainable growth of job opportunities, employment of the labor force into more productive and growing sectors, and

assurance that the next generation of the labor force is getting the necessary training and preparation to move to a higher career ladder in the production process. This would create economic growth that is shared, comprehensive, and sustainable in that an increasing share of the labor force and the population would become both the source and beneficiaries of the improved economic growth process.

It should be noted, however, that the process of economic growth does not follow sector neutral, economic agent neutral, or policy neutral pathways. The process of economic growth involves creative innovation of entrepreneurs and the policy and institutional environment in which economic decisions are made. This usually leads to sequential changes in economic activities, first in limiting industries or sectors and then eventually in reaching the entire economy. Entrepreneurs allocate their limited investment resources in areas that promise the most in terms of risk-adjusted real return which involves a selective approach towards areas of investment to be provided with priorities. Those sectors and activities receive the initial investment allocation and employ the factors of production in the flow of sequential economic activities. In this framework, growth in employment and income accrues to those ready and able to benefit from the initial investment process and translate their employment into higher output and income. Economic growth hence is characterized by such discontinuous processes that reshape the scope and intensity of utilization of economic resources in the system.

If national economic growth is driven by industrial sector growth, it is natural that investment resources and employment opportunities expand in the industrial sector attracting more resources from the rest of the economy and eventually reallocating these factors towards the sector. Those who are actively employed and engage in the industrial sector would be the first beneficiaries of the process with subsequent effects on the rest of the economic sectors. In the meantime, income and employment opportunities grow relatively faster in the industrial sector which leads perhaps to changes in the pattern of income distribution in favor of the industrial sector and workers, followed by those economic sectors that have direct and strong links with the industrial activities. In this way, the growth process disrupts the prevailing pattern of economic activities as well as the distribution of employment and income across economic sectors. The challenges and efficiency in economic policy making in the context of developing countries revolve around identifying the potentials of the economy and redirecting collective efforts towards such endeavors, and in the process, benefiting those involved in the growth of the new opportunities. Countries that have managed to generate sustained, steady, and inclusive economic growth were able to register drastic reduction in chronic poverty and set the stage for further development of their national economies. The experiences of such successful developing countries clearly indicate that addressing the challenges of poverty requires combining both the growth and income distribution approaches along with continuous effort to balance the two forces.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The contours of success in poverty alleviation across African countries are closely related to economic growth performance, the initial level of income, the level and changes in the

distribution of income, and the extent to which the political-economy of these countries facilitates the opportunities for sustainable and shared economic growth. While African countries have registered modest progress in their fight against poverty, the challenge remains daunting, and those who escape chronic poverty are still vulnerable to fall back into the poverty trap. Generalized poverty is prevalent in a number of African countries where aggregate output of these economies is simply not large enough to provide the necessities of life for their population. In such a situation, the first order of priority is to enable the economy to break away from the structural bottlenecks in which it finds itself due to hostile policy, institutional, demographic, and environmental pressures.

The improvements in recent years both in growth rate and poverty indicators are mainly driven by better economic growth whereas further progress highly depends on addressing inequality concerns and improving the political-economy environment of the countries. Success in poverty reduction in African countries has been very uneven and the overall picture conceals critical challenges in a large number of countries that have limited capacity to initiate and sustain economic growth. Inequality remains a serious challenge in a number of countries and reform measures to address the problem have been moderate. With a few exceptions, there is an apparent deterioration in the pattern of income distribution. The evidence suggests that improving the pattern of income distribution in favor of the poor has significant impact on reducing the depth and scope of poverty and sustaining economic growth.

The objective of eliminating chronic poverty within the framework of global sustainable development faces its weakest point in the context of African countries and requires addressing the remaining hurdles in these countries to sustain and create growth inclusive of the poor. Access to education and health services to the poor generates long lasting human capital capabilities among the poor that would enable them to earn decent standards of living. Addressing the problems of inequality has considerable potential to moderate the problems of chronic poverty in Africa. Building the political economic environment and institutions necessary for mobilization of support for poverty alleviation are important to translate economic growth into sustainable poverty reduction. It is therefore vitally important for African countries to focus their effort to initiate and sustain shared economic growth so that an increasing share of their population escapes chronic poverty.

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# **Who Is In the “We”? Interrogating the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and Youth Political Participation**

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## **Abstract**

Most analyses of the African Union (AU) focus on the politics of the state and presidents. There are very few analyses that focus on aspects such as youth development. This article departs from that tradition. It argues that although the youth were always part of important historical developments in Africa, they have remained on the periphery. In recent times, particularly since the transformation of the Organization of African Unity into the AU in the 2000s, the youth development agenda has begun to receive attention at the policy level. In 2015, the AU through Agenda 2063 went a step further by elevating youth matters to the mainstream continental policy framework. While these developments are all welcome, it emerges clear that in the arena of youth political participation, the continent remains hesitant. Where the AU and its member states adopt the language and grammar of youth inclusion, of which youth political participation is often limited, such is not met with fitting institutional and practical policy arrangements. This article finds that the African elite is in for a rude awakening, as we have witnessed since 2011, given the discovery by the African youth of new methods of political participation in post-colonial Africa. It advocates for the adoption of the African community outlook to a youth state policy, argues for linking youth to the project of economic freedom, and implores the African elite to embark upon the decolonial project to resolve the bearings of coloniality of being, power and knowledge.

## **Introduction**

Although the youth played an important role in the fight against colonialism in Africa, the liberating generation upon taking office did not see the need of placing youth development at the center of state policy in the liberated zones. The youth were to regard themselves as beneficiaries of an independent Africa which must be grateful to the fearless freedom fighters who freed the continent from colonial rule. 24 years after Namibia attained independence, former President of Namibia Hifikepunye Pohamba gave this warning to the youth of Namibia on 26 August 2014: “this [liberation struggle] was not easy as some of you want to believe. It was hard, long and bitter and we, the old freedom fighters, fought to the end and liberated the country and the people. Some of us lost our lives because of this right cause (Shivute, 2014).

In some extreme cases, the expectations of the youth to sing praises to liberating heroes led to dictatorships. In Malawi, President Kamuzu Banda ensured that everything in Malawi had been revolved around him. As Malawian academic Professor Wiseman Chijere Chirwa explains “throughout the 1960s, political songs reflected Banda's consolidation of power and his emerging dictatorship. Because of his heroic triumph, everything in the country belonged to him” (Chirwa 2001, p. 8). African liberation leaders even created concepts and philosophies that were forced

down the throats of the citizens as national philosophies and concepts. South African political scientist Prince Mashele explains such an occurrence in Kenya:

In Kenya, during the reign of Daniel Arap Moi... citizens were obliged to follow in the footsteps of Moi. To entrench his despotism, Moi introduced a philosophy called Nyayo (footstep) projecting himself as a pathfinder and the rest of society as followers. Political commentators who dared not to follow in Moi's footsteps faced one of two hard realities: you disappear or flee to exile. So serious was Moi about his Nyayo philosophy that he could replace a vice-chancellor of any university with someone prepared to follow in the correct political footsteps. (Mashele, 2011)

The continent is, therefore, nourished with many examples illustrating how African liberation leaders perceived post-independent Africa as a personal trophy they obtained for liberating the continent through their heroic deeds. The citizens, particularly the youth, must at all time - it was made clear - be grateful and celebrate the freedom fighters and allow them to rule undisturbed. Fast forward to 2017, Africa still has the world's oldest leaders. Below is an illustration of Africa's top 20 oldest presidents for illustrative purposes;

Table 1  
*Rulers by country and age*

Name	Country	Age
1. Robert Mugabe	Zimbabwe	93
2. Beji Caid Essebsi	Tunisia	91
3. Paul Biya	Cameroon	84
4. Abselaziz Bouteflika	Algeria	80
5. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	Liberia	79
6. Alpha Conde	Guinea	79
7. Peter Mutharika	Malawi	77
8. Hage Geingob	Namibia	76
9. Teodoro Obiang Mbasogo	Equatorial Guinea	75
10. Jose Eduardo dos Santos	Angola	75
11. Alassane Ouattara	Cote d'Ivoire	75
12. Jacob Zuma	South Africa	75
13. Mohammadu Buhari	Nigeria	74
14. Denis Ngueso	Congo	74
15. Akufo Addo	Ghana	73
16. Yoweri Museveni	Uganda	73
17. Pakalitha Mosilili	Lesotho	73
18. Omar al-Bashir	Sudan	73
19. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita	Mali	72
20. Ismail Omar Guelleh	Djibouti	71

To put Table 1 in fitting context and to understand how liberating leaders in Africa saw themselves as the only ones to govern Africa, it is necessary to juxtapose the above table to Table 2 of Africa's longest serving leaders. The table below shows that most of Africa's oldest leaders are also the longest serving leaders. Although it may appear obvious that the oldest would be longest serving, it must be clarified, for example, that while Ghana's Akufo Addo may be Africa's 15<sup>th</sup> oldest leader, he only has been in office a few months, having assumed office only in January 2017. Namibia's Hage Geingob is Africa's 8<sup>th</sup> oldest leader but has only spent two years in office since his inauguration in March 2015.

Table 2

*Leaders by country and years in office*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Years in office</b>
<b>1. Paul Biya</b>	Cameroon	42 years
<b>2. Teodoro Obiang Mbasogo</b>	Equatoria Guinea	38 years
<b>3. Jose Eduardo dos Santos</b>	Angola	38 years
<b>4. Robert Mugabe</b>	Zimbabwe	37 years
<b>5. Yoweri Museveni</b>	Uganda	31 years
<b>6. Omar al-Bashir</b>	Sudan	28 years
<b>7. Idris Deby</b>	Chad	27 years
<b>8. Isaias Afwerki</b>	Eritrea	26 years
<b>9. Paul Kagame</b>	Rwanda	23 years
<b>10. Denis Sassou Nguesso</b>	Congo	20 years

This state of African leadership has not only generated an interest by foreign scholars, such as Aguilar (1998), but from countries led by relatively younger leaders. African scholars and researchers have also taken keen interest in this debate. This debate is captured around the concept of gerontocracy. Nigerian academic, Omotade Adegbindin, explains that a gerontocracy "is a political system, a form of oligarchical rule, whereby a small group of elderly individuals are in control of power. Unpopular due to its peculiar nature, it is in short, a rule by old men" (Adegbindin, 2011, p. 454). Drawing from other scholars to locate this concept in Africa, Adegbindin (2011) captures Dei (1994) explaining that in African tradition a gerontocracy is seen as occurring where "respect for the authority of elderly persons for their wisdom, knowledge of community affairs, and 'closeness' to the ancestors... there is in Africa a general belief that 'old age comes with wisdom and an understanding of the world'" (Adegbindin, 2011, p. 13). Kenyan academic Peter Onyango Onyoyo provides clarity in detail:

Gerontocracy is the rule by elders or a type of government that associates leadership with elders. ... Ipso facto in several African traditional societies in which customary law ruled the lives of people, the role of elders was substantial and critical for order and harmony. The elders are construed to be the custodians of customary law, its promulgators and

enforcers... In the post-independent Africa, gerontocracy in the political sense has become notorious as some elders cling on power to dominate and favour their next of kin. Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe is an example in which the leader sees his status as elder to be the reason to cling on power. The late Muammar Ghedafi did the same in Libya, President Paul Biye of Cameroon, and the late President Eyadema of Togo did the same. Elders in political leadership in Africa have been associated with hunger for power other than wisdom. (Onyoyo 2017, pp. 2-3)

It should, therefore, be no surprise that the entire structure of the OAU did not have a clear and specialized function dedicated to a continental youth development agenda. The Pan African Youth Movement (PYM) which later became the Pan African Youth Union (PYU) established in 1962 (a year before the founding of the OAU in 1963) was recognized by the OUA but never integrated into its activities. Historically, the PYM consisted of the youth of African ruling political parties in general and youth of former liberation movements in particular. After achieving independence, the PYM lost currency in the eyes of the liberating leaders subsequently losing momentum (Nueys, 2012). The African Union (AU), the successor of the OAU, established in 1999, only became concerned with youth development seven years after its formation. This is confirmed by the AU 2011 *State of the African Youth Report 2011* in no uncertain terms.

Africa's commitment to youth development and welfare was amply manifested in 2006 with the adoption by African Heads of State and Government of the African Youth Charter. The charter provides a framework for developing and implementing more tangible youth policies and programmes. (AUC, 2012, p. VII)

In a foreword to the same report, Professor Jean-Pierre Ezin, the then Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology of the African Union Commission (AUC), summarized what to him was continental commitment to the continental youth development agenda.

The African Union Commission has come a long way in its efforts to promote youth development and empowerment in Africa. It developed the African Youth Charter, which was approved by African Heads of State and Government in 2006 and which entered into force in a relatively short time. The Charter constitutes a continental legal framework that seeks to re-position the challenges, potential, contributions and rights of young people in the mainstream of Africa's socio-economic growth and development. In 2009, the AU Executive Council declared the years 2009-2018 as the Decade for Youth Development and Empowerment in Africa. Subsequently, the AU Ministers in Charge of Youth Affairs approved the Decade Plan of Action (DPoA) – a roadmap for accelerating the implementation of the charter. By deciding to focus on the theme *Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development* for the 2011 Summit of African Union Heads

of State and Government, the AU demonstrates the importance it attaches to the role and contribution of the youth in the development process. (AU 2012, p. VI)

The mindset of the liberation leaders – of youth to be grateful to political freedom fighters – has extended to the technical staff of the AUC. How else does one explain AUC commissioner Ezin’s conclusion that something as flimsy as a theme can be regarded as demonstrating the importance that the AU attaches to the role and contribution of the youth in the development process? In 2011, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) released its *2011 African Youth Report*. Abdoulie Janneh, the then United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, did not conceal the reality of the exclusion and nonparticipation of African youth in decision making.

As argued in this report, young people need an enabling environment politically, economically and socially to thrive in our countries. They need to be empowered so that they can be represented and participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Though Africa has made progress in providing education and skills for more young people than ever before, youth unemployment and underemployment remain a major challenge. Innovative approaches and in-depth analysis of youth issues at both the design and implementation phases of policies and programmes are needed to ensure effective delivery and better outcomes towards a great future for the young women and men of Africa. (Economic Commission for Africa, 2011, p. VIII)

To its credit, the AU distinguished itself from the OAU by creating a youth division within the structures of the AUC. According to the AU, the “youth division under the Department of Human Resources, Science & Technology (HRST) is the division responsible for Africa’s Youth Agenda in the African Union Commission (AUC)” (African Union Commission, 2017). Most importantly, the AU’s language and articulation of the importance of the youth division is the most telling in the subsequent sentences, “It [Youth Division] promotes youth participation such as organizing youth forums and celebrating Africa Youth Day. By harmonizing and coordinating member states as well as bringing together all relevant stakeholders, the youth division is mandated to, among other functions, use the outcomes and recommendations from all sectors through appropriate training frameworks to strengthen the African Youth” (African Union Commission, 2017).

What the above states is simply that the AU sees youth participation as represented by flimsy things such as *celebrating Youth Day*. This mindset is similar to that of Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, as discussed earlier, who saw the role of the youth and women as that of singing, clapping hands and celebrating him. The AU makes it clear that the mandate of the division is not to ensure that youth have input into decisions but merely to receive and accept *outcomes* and *recommendations*. From the 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> of May 2016, the AU held what was called the Banjul+10 Summit on the 10-year implementation of the African Youth Charter in The Gambia to review the

progress made in regard to the African Youth Charter since its adoption in 2006. It was found that most African states still did not ratify the Charter. In the outcome document, the AU set a target of ensuring that there would be a “hundred percent ratification by the end of 2016” (African Union, 2016). Speaking on the future prospects for African youth, in Germany on 6 April 2017 at the Potsdam Dialogues, the AUC Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, Martial De-Paul Ikounga, disclosed that the wishful target of 100 percent ratification of the charter that was previously set in Banjul was not achieved (Ikounga, 2017).

What emerges clearly from the above is that to both the OAU and its successor the AU, the youth and the youth agenda are either a non-issue or peripheral issue. In response, the youth did not sit idle. There have been a number of responses from the African youth. Although the PYU enjoyed cordial relations with both the OUA and AU, it faced several challenges, particularly financial challenges, given the somewhat ‘arm-chair’ approach of leadership of the continental body. The continental youth body was forced to change its headquarters three times: from Conakry, Guinea, to Algiers, Algeria in 1967; then from Algiers to Khartoum, Sudan, in 2008 (NUEYS, 2012). Speaking at the African Youth Day on 1 November 2012, the former chairperson of the African Union Commission Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma admitted the serious challenges faced by the PYU thus promising the AUC’s commitment to embark upon the *revitalization* of the Pan African Youth Union (The Point, 2012). It does not require sophistication to note that revitalization can only take place when faced with decline and weakening.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2013 in Tunisia, the AUC in collaboration with the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) coordinating Agency, the African Development Bank and the ECA organized a youth consultative meeting on the envisaged Agenda 2063. This meeting culminated in the establishment of the AU Youth Working Group (AUYWG). The AUYWG later transformed itself into the African Youth Commission (AYC) that held its first General Assembly and elected the founding leadership in January 2017 on the sidelines of the AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The AYC, seeing itself as the youth version of the AUC, set its objective as an organization where “all inspiring and capable young African leaders and African Diaspora can organize themselves, take up their responsibilities, strengthen cooperation among the youth and youth structures as a platform, speak up and promote youth voices in the context of Africa’s development” (African Youth Commission, 2017). It further outlined its objectives as:

to organize all young people in Africa and Diaspora for the promotion of African unity and development through linkage of youth and youth structures and mobilization of resources (human, technical, technology and finance) to support the work of African youth, youth structures, Pan African Youth Union and Youth Division of the African Union Commission in their quest to effective service delivery and advocacy activities on the African Youth Charter, other AU legal instruments and youth projects at national, regional and continental levels for the advancement of Africa (African Youth Commission, 2017, p. 4).

As it did with the PYU, the AU took an “arm-chair” approach to the AYC although it played an indirect role in its creation. Towards the AYC General Assembly in January 2017, the African Union Youth Division released a statement that was regarded as an attempt to either sabotage or distance the continental body from the youth program. The statement, released on 13 January 2017, merely a week before the youth General Assembly, read:

With regards to the upcoming AYC Annual General Assembly on the 22-25 January 2017 in Addis Ababa, we wish to categorically state that we have not been involved in the coordination of this event as has been erroneously reported across various media. Unfortunately, this avoidable situation is a misrepresentation that has caused confusion, particularly among prospective participants, and simultaneously hampered the event’s credibility. (African Union Youth Division, 2017)

While making such damaging remarks, the division still went on to state that it would encourage “pro-active initiatives of African youth in forming organizations, networks or think tanks as a response to the prevailing challenges that affect them; whether it is at the national, regional or continental levels” (African Union Youth Division, 2017). Be that as it may, the AYC General Assembly went ahead and elected its leadership. This then meant that there were now two continental youth organizations: the PYU and the AYC. One of the arguments used by those at the forefront of AYC is that unlike PYU that is host to the National Youth Councils, the AYC membership is open to individual youth and civil society organizations that would not get an opportunity to engage in the continental youth development agenda under the PYU framework. The other argument used against the PYU is that it appears to be too political and aligned to ruling parties in Africa of which some are responsible for the suppression of the youth and underdevelopment. In other words, the PYU, through its national youth councils, stands complicit.

There have been responses from African youth, responses to gerontocracies, authoritarianism, corruption and underdevelopment, outside the PYU and AYC structures. One of the well-known initiatives taken by the youth of Africa to ensure political participation is what has come to be known as the Arab Springs - the popular grassroots protests that took place in North Africa and toppled several African dictators. Ruge (2012) explains what underpinned the Arab Spring.

At the heart of the Arab Spring was a disgruntled youth class seeking democratic representation and economic participation. Remember Mohamed Bouazizi, the Tunisian street vendor whose self-immolation launched the uprisings? He didn’t set himself ablaze because he had a smart phone. His self-immolation was his last desperate attempt to bring attention to his economic exclusion. His peers in the region sympathized and, almost overnight, Tunisia and the political landscape of most of Northern Africa changed. It was a signal that Africa’s ruling class was under siege. On one end, Mr. Bouazizi, aged 26, represented Africa’s emerging youth class, an impatient demographic eager to upend the

status quo (he was only five years younger than the median Tunisian). On the other, deposed dictator Ben Ali, age 76, stood as a breed of elder statesmen – disconnected from the needs of populations, and facing extinction.

As dictators in North Africa were being toppled, their contemporaries in the rest of the continent worked hard to control the youth and avoid similar uprising. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni is said to have deployed the military into the streets of Kampala to quell protests (Smith, 2011). Despite these attempts, the youth in the zones with long serving and authoritarian leaders still managed to wage protests in one way or the other. Years later, in 2014, the long-serving despot Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso was forced to flee the country. Pictures of youth jubilantly jumping on top of seats in Burkina Faso Parliament went viral on social media (Berman, 2014). In stable democracies, where corruption and underdevelopment were rampant, particularly in Southern Africa, the youth formed radical social movements agitating for transformation, social justice and equality. Consider the case of Namibia as explained by Namibian academic Phaniel Kaapama (2016, p. 32):

Namibia reached her Fanonian moment... a new generation has entered the country's social and political scene and has forcefully asked penetrating new questions. So, Namibia's 'Fanonian moment' has come in the form of the [Affirmative Repositioning] AR movement. Other issues that have come under the radar of AR's fervent political eye include the perceived/allege widespread nepotism and corruption among the political and economic elite... The AR movement has 'declared war' on what it calls the "general zombie tendency" and its politics of hand-clapping and singing for the satisfaction of politicians, by working towards liberating the youth by converting them into active citizens and upright activists.

In some parts of North Africa, the youth have taken serious risks such as attempting to cross rivers and oceans into Europe in search of economic opportunities and political stability. Consider the case that *The Gambia* reported, "for its size, Gambia is experiencing a disproportionate number of people leaving the country. Its population is just under 2 million, yet over the past two years, it has been ranked fourth and fifth in the International Organisation for Migration's league of the six main nationalities identified attempting to cross the Mediterranean from Libya to Italy" (Hunt, 2015). In North, East and West Africa some youth resolved to join armed military groups such as Boko Haram and others (Onuoha, 2014).

This account and survey of continental youth political participation and developmental agenda was necessary to buttress the point that the scope of analysis should not only concern itself with the center and the institutions within its reach but should also consider (a) the existence of a periphery, (b) an understanding of why the periphery exists, and (c) the interaction, if any, between the center and periphery. The fundamental question, therefore, remains - who is in? Who is included in the center-led conversation and who do they represent? Indeed, who is out and what



do they feel and what are they going to and willing to do about it? It is only when these questions are answered that it can be determine how youth political participation can be improved.

### **Agenda 2063 - Who Is The “We”?**

#### **The Essence of Agenda 2063**

Agenda 2063 is a program of the AU adopted by African Heads of State and Government who assembled in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at the 24<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in January 2015. In that session outcome, the African Heads of State and Governments romanticized Agenda 2063 as

“[an] endogenous plan for transformation. It harnesses the continent’s comparative advantages such as its people, history and cultures; its natural resources; its position and repositioning in the world to effect equitable and people-centered social, economic and technological transformation and the eradication of poverty. It seeks to fulfil our obligation to our children as an inter-generational compact, to develop Africa’s human capital; build social assets, infrastructure and public goods; empower women and youth; promote lasting peace and security; build effective developmental states and participatory and accountable institutions of governance; [articulate] Africa’s vision and roadmap for sequencing our sectoral and normative, national, regional and continental plans into a coherent whole; plus, be a call to action to all Africans and people of African descent, to take personal responsibility for the destiny of the continent and as the primary agents of change and transformation, and a commitment from citizens, leadership, governments and institutions at national, regional and continental levels to act, coordinate, and cooperate for the realization of this vision” (AU, 2015, p. 13).

And, as a policy framework that aims to provide a collective developmental path for Africa’s development, Agenda 2063 is anchored on 7 pillars: (1) a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; (2) an integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa’s Renaissance; (3) an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; (4) a peaceful and secure Africa; (5) an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics; (6) an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children; and (7) an Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner (AU, 2015).

#### **Youth Content in Agenda 2063**

While there might not be a specific aspiration that speaks to youth political participation, it is important to note that *aspiration 6* speaks of an Africa whose development is people driven and relies on the potential of the African people, especially its *youth*. What Agenda 2063 does, despite tokenism analysis, is to depart from a longstanding tradition of the OAU and AU of peripherising youth development. In fact, the OAU Charter, in both Article II (purposes) and

Article III (principles), makes no mention or inference to youth (Elias, 1965). The Constitutive Act of the AU also does not change this state of affairs. Its Article 3 (on the Objectives of the AU) and Article 4 (on the Principles of the AU) both fail to make mention of the youth (AU, 2000). While some might argue that the youth do not necessarily warrant mentioning in these legislative instruments, it must be noted that the AU Constitutive Act mentions in Article 4 the promotion of gender equality (often a twin to youth empowerment/inclusion) as one of the principles of the AU. Agenda 2063, therefore, departs from the AU tradition of placing youth at the periphery. The policy framework admits that “no society can reach its full potential, unless it empowers ... youth” and sets an objective of having an engaged and empowered youth (AU, 2015). Furthermore, it articulates and makes the following daring declarations on youth as part of *Aspiration 6*:

- The youth of Africa shall be socially, economically and politically empowered through the full implementation of the African Youth Charter.
- All forms of systemic inequalities, exploitation, marginalization and discrimination of young people will be eliminated, and youth issues mainstreamed in all development agendas.
- Youth unemployment will be eliminated, and Africa’s youth guaranteed full access to education, training, skills and technology, health services, jobs and economic opportunities, and recreational and cultural activities as well as financial means and all necessary resources to allow them to realize their full potential.
- Young African men and women will be the path breakers of the African knowledge society and will contribute significantly to innovation and entrepreneurship. The creativity, energy and innovation of Africa’s youth shall be the driving force behind the continent’s political, social, cultural and economic transformation.

It is evident that Agenda 2063 has some content on the youth. As stated before, the decision to place youth in a central/mainstream AU document is a serious departure from the policy positions and approach of both the OUA and AU. In 2013, the AU started consulting the youth regarding Agenda 2063. The consultations will later bear fruit if the content of Agenda 2063 is taken into consideration. In November 2013 in Hamamet, Tunisia, the AU held consultation with the youth on Agenda 2063. It was at this gathering that the youth immaculately presented to the AU their desire to actively participate in the politics and governance of the AU, and its member states. The youth went further to indicate that the Africa they want is one wherein they are involved in the drafting of policies and take an active part in the implementation and monitoring process. At that conference, youth political participation was invoked. Resultantly, a working group called the African Union Youth Working Group (AUYWG) was established to ensure that the resolution of the youth that gathered there was included in the African developmental way forward in general and in Agenda 2063 in particular. Four years later, in 2017, the AUYWG transformed itself into an independent continental youth organization, the AYC, whose primary purpose would be to monitor the AUC and the AU and ensure that youth concerns would not be placed at the periphery (Dhlamini, 2017). This development alone indicates not only the input youth made into Agenda 2063 but their determination to create their own independent spaces and ensure political

participation. The other aspects of youth consultation and input into Agenda 2063 took place at the state level. The AU policy organ, at its July 2014 meeting in Equatorial Guinea, had tasked member states to embark upon domestic consultations with various stakeholders (youth, academia, women, civil society and women) and submit the outcomes to the AUC by 31 October 2014. South Africa, for example, held such consultation with the youth on 11 July 2014 (DIRCO, 2015).

### **‘It Is In But Not In’**

In November 2015, the biggest daily newspaper in Namibia, *The Namibian*, ran a story that President Hage Geingob had temporarily moved out of the State House to his mansion on the outskirts of the capital city, Windhoek, to allow for expensive renovations that were in line with his taste. The Presidential Affairs Minister, Frans Kapofi, was at pains in explaining as to whether the President had moved out of the State House. In response to journalists, who were asking for confirmation as to whether the president has indeed moved out, Kapofi flip-flopped stating the following, “He [president] is here but he is not here” (Immanuel & Mongudhi, 2015). Kapofi’s explanation is a fitting importation to explain youth political participation in Agenda 2063 or, though slightly amended, to ‘it is in, but not in’. While there is considerable content and mention in Agenda 2063 of youth, it is not clear as to whether this constitutes political participation. The language and grammar of Agenda 2063 speaks to what the AU will do for youth and not what it can do together with youth. It sees youth as mere subjects to benefit from the generosity of their elders who have now mentioned them in their documents. It makes use of terms such as “support young people” and many ‘othering’ terms when discussing the youth. The main version, called the popular version of Agenda 2063, states the following as the actionable programs that speak to youth (AU, 2015):

... support young people as drivers of Africa’s renaissance, through investment in their health, education and access to technology, opportunities and capital, and concerted strategies to combat youth unemployment and underemployment. Ensure faster movement on the harmonization of continental admissions, curricula, standards, programmes and qualifications and raising the standards of higher education to enhance the mobility of African youth and talent across the continent.

It is evident that what is an envisaged and actionable program of the Agenda 2063 does not include political participation. The language and grammar of Agenda 2063 make itself available to the interpretation that reform and youth inclusion are limited to health, education, technology, economic opportunities and education. Youth political participation is not conspicuously part of Agenda 2063. They are thus perceived as readily available beneficiaries of the political generosity of their elders who have now included their issues in key policy documents such as Agenda 2030. The youth are, therefore ‘In but not in’ in Agenda 2063. Agenda 2063 is often paraded, and its content so read, around the phrase of ‘The Africa We Want.’ Although it appears that youth are indeed part of the *we*, or they might perceive themselves as part of the *we*, it appears, on closer inspection, that the *we* is an exclusive imagery of the African Heads of State and Government. As

will be further elaborated in the proceeding pages, youth political participation remains a peripheral concern despite making an appearance in key policy documents of the AU.

### **African Political Elite Orientation towards Youth Political Participation**

As has been explored and displayed earlier, youth matters have always been peripheral in the imagination and discourse of African political leaders. If the youth matters are themselves peripheral, one can only imagine how distant youth political participation would be in the minds of African political leaders. To understand what and how African leaders perceive youth, one only needs to study how the African governments conceptualize ministries dealing with youth affairs. A short illustration is thus necessary.

Table 3

*Country and youth participation*

<b>Country Name</b>	<b>Name of Ministry</b>
<b>Angola</b>	Youth and Sport
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	Youth, Professional Education and Employment
<b>Cameroon</b>	Youth Affairs and Civic Education
<b>DRC</b>	Youth and Sports
<b>Ethiopia</b>	Youth and Sports
<b>Gabon</b>	Youth and Sports
<b>Kenya</b>	Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs
<b>Lesotho</b>	Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation
<b>Liberia</b>	Youth and Sports
<b>Mali</b>	Youth and Citizenship Building
<b>Namibia</b>	Youth, Sports and National Service
<b>Nigeria</b>	Youth Development
<b>Rwanda</b>	Youth and ICT
<b>Senegal</b>	Youth, Employment and Promotion of Civic Values
<b>Sudan</b>	Youth and Sports
<b>The Gambia</b>	Youth and Sports
<b>Togo</b>	Basic Development, Crafts, Youth and Youth Employment
<b>Tunisia</b>	Youth, Sports, Women and Families
<b>Uganda</b>	Youth and Children Affairs
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	Youth, Indigenization and Economic Empowerment

Table 3 represents a random selection of 20 African countries and indicates the following: (a) most African leaders view the youth's main objective and role as that of entertainment, chasing footballs and dancing/singing during national events. It is for this reason that in most African countries youth ministries are placed together with recreation, sports, national service or civic education.; but (b) Zimbabwe sees youth in relation to economic empowerment and indigenization,

Kenya links youth to planning, and Rwanda links youth to ICT which provides a new and fresh perspective that departs from the orthodox linkage of youth to entertainment and sports. With the exception of few cases, this illustrates that youth are perceived as peripheral issues. It is therefore understandable that youth play a very small, if any, role in continental agenda setting.

As such, it can be argued that despite its predecessor the OAU that started off as a people-centered continental body that at one point assisted non-state actors fighting for national liberation, the AU remains engaged in elite politics. It is therefore no surprise that, although Agenda 2063 speaks about fighting for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, the AU recently resolved to admit Morocco to the African Union without a clear explanation and direction (Kazeem, 2017). What is clear is that once an elite pact is concluded, the aspiration of young men and women fighting with determination in Western Sahara does not matter (Akwei, 2017). The youth, including those of Western Sahara, are to remain beneficiaries of the 'generous' elders who have mentioned them in key documents such as Agenda 2063. When the African passport was launched at the 27<sup>th</sup> Summit of the AU in Kigali, Rwanda, the first recipients were not youth to symbolize a future-looking continent but the African elites, Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Chadian President Idris Deby Itno, who already enjoy diplomatic privileges until death. Giving these individuals African passports thus becomes irrelevant on close inspection (Adibe, 2016). These are amongst the many reasons that support the argument that the AU prioritizes elite interest dwarfing any elevation of matters such as youth political participation.

In a 2011 Afrobarometer's working paper titled *The Political Participation of Africa's Youth: Turnout, Partisanship and Protest*, Danielle Resnick and Daniela Casale capture the orientation of African youth as it relates to political participation:

Our findings suggest that Africa's youth, particularly those residing in urban areas, operate in broadly similar ways to their counterparts in other regions of the world. In comparison with their older compatriots, the youth vote less and are more likely to demonstrate no partisanship or an attachment to opposition parties rather than any affinity to incumbent parties. Yet, the likelihood of their involvement in protests is not significantly different from that of their older counterparts. Moreover, we find that the youth, unlike older voters, tend to vote less the longer an incumbent party has been in office. In addition, poor incumbent performance on job creation, compared with other socio-economic issues, increases the likelihood of the youth to express either no partisanship or an affinity to the opposition. In terms of protest activity, higher levels of education and economic deprivation, as well as a lack of satisfaction with democracy, increase the likelihood that the youth will protest while demonstrating a null impact on their older cohorts' protest activities. (Resnick & Casale, 2011, p. 2)

At the time Resnick and Casale (2011) published their paper, Africa had just experienced the youth-led uprising in North Africa that toppled long-serving dictators and authoritarian leaders. As stated in the introduction to this paper, a young Mohamed Bouazizi found himself in circumstances that were confirmed by the studies of Resnick and Casale, which led him to setting

himself alight and becoming a martyr of the youth-led revolution that spread fast and had as its casualty some long-serving African authoritarian leaders. The marginalization of the youth and the consequences thereto can be placed squarely at the doorstep of an unresponsive policy environment and the ‘periphering’ of the youth from mainstream political participation. Indeed, it is the failure of African states to engage the youth into activities that are aimed at influencing the selection, constituting and general decisions of the government bureaucracy. As previously stated, the marginalization of the youth from mainstream political participation and ‘periphering’ the youth did not leave the youth idling. They found alternative forms of political participation at their location - the periphery. To the surprise of many, as what happened with the Arab Spring and with popular urbanized protests in southern Africa, the periphery found its way to the mainstream forcing the political elite to either capitulate or engage those who were seen as ‘peripherised’ (Branch & Mampilly, 2015).

The AU in Agenda 2063 adopted a language and grammar that can be said to have diagnosed the danger of ‘peripherising’ the youth. In what can be seen as either appeasement or commitment to prevent the relapse of the popular protests, Agenda 2063 promised that “all forms of systemic inequalities, exploitation, marginalization and discrimination of young people will be eliminated, and youth issues mainstreamed in all development agendas” (AUC, 2015). Although the AU documents, such as Agenda 2063, appear to suggest that the AU and its member states are somewhat committed to bring about real political participation, its rhetoric does not seem to be supported by credible institutional arrangements. Consider the Youth Division of the AU that is responsible for Africa’s youth agenda at the AUC. The division explains that it promotes youth participation by “organizing forums and celebrating Africa Youth Day” (AU, 2017). It goes further to admit that its mandate is to use the outcomes and recommendations to strengthen the youth. This is a clear indication of two things: firstly, like is the case amongst AU member states, the AU understands the youth in the context of entertainment and celebration days like Africa Youth Day; secondly, it is an admission that the mandate of the division is not to influence decisions but to use the outcomes and recommendation (already made) to strengthen the youth. In other words, youth are to be beneficiaries and recipients of the “generosity” of the elders. Had the AUC, its youth division and member states been interested in genuine political participation, it would have endorsed campaigns such as *Not Too Young to Run*, supported and spearheaded by the UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, Ahmad Alhendawi. This campaign aims at doing away with restrictive practices, particularly in most African countries, where state policy prevents young people from running for public office (Srour, 2016)

## **Conclusion – What Is To Be Done?**

### **Make the Circle Bigger**

If there is any lesson to be learned from recent popular and far-reaching events spearheaded by the youth from the Arab Spring in North Africa to violent extremists in West and East Africa and popular urbanized protests in southern Africa, it is this: it is in the interest of the African elites

to engage the African youth and ensure that they facilitate political participation in mainstream national politics in a genuine, inclusive and constructive manner. The African youth have proven that they do not need permission and are capable of organizing their own independent forms of political participation that often lead to their desired outcomes - destructive as it may seem particularly to those profiting in an exclusive status quo. It is in the interest of peaceful coexistence for the African leaders to create an enabling environment for political participation of youth. The current leaders must, indeed, make the circle bigger.

### **Linking Youth to Economic Freedom**

The underlying objective of the African liberation struggle against colonialism was not only to bring about self-determination but also to solve the then contractions of political power. The understanding and imagination of the liberating leaders, such as the likes of Kwame Nkrumah, were that political freedom will lead to economic freedom for the oppressed masses on the African continent. In fact, one of Nkrumah's famous phrases has been one that states that you first seek the political kingdom and the rest shall be added unto you. The 'rest' that Nkrumah was referring to is seen as the *economic kingdom*. It is now a common understanding that Nkrumah's dream was not fulfilled (Mashele & Qobo, 2014). This dismal failure has not left youth idling. The youth have understood the liberating generation as having failed economically thus necessitating the current need for economic freedom fighters to emerge and fight for economic freedom (Shivambu, 2014). Although the youth understands that their mission is to continue the incomplete struggle to solve the remaining contradictions of economic power, the struggle was started by the liberating generation, and it has become impossible to pursue this struggle without confronting the very same fighters and victors of political freedom because of their positionality (Seibeb, 2016). For as long as the AU member states continue to define youth from the perspective of entertainment, sports and agents of celebration during national festivals and events, conflicts between these states and the youth will continue to occur. As such, examples of Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Kenya who locate youth in the context of economic freedom – viewing youth as an agency of solving the remaining contradictions of economic power – must be emulated.

### **Appropriate African Community Outlook to Youth State Policy**

Because of the conduct of the politics of the state, the liberation generation has often taken an opportunistic approach to the appropriation of African tradition and culture. The African political elites often resort to African tradition and practices such as respect of elders to opportunistically escape from accountability and evade serious questions related to their political conduct. There are several African practices and value systems that remain important and can assist in bringing about the youth's political participation in the mainstream national discourse. One such African value system is the African outlook or conceptualization of a community. Africans have always understood the community as consisting of (a) the dead, (b) the living, and (c) those yet to be born (Kamalu, 2000). The dead are regarded as part of the community although may not be visible to everyone. They are in the ancestry watching over, supervising and protecting the living.

For their part, the living plays a dual role: firstly, they live their lives and lead society in adherence in regard and observation of the values and norms that were left by the departed who are in the ancestry and part of the community watching over them; secondly, the living leads their lives and society in such a way that they preserve a good community for those who have yet to arrive on earth. The community must be preserved in such a way that when the living takes their position in the ancestry, they will be watching over the new living (the present unborn) who will preside over a community that they left in good shape. The African elites opportunistically leave out this outlook that has ensured accountability and self-regulation in the African traditional society (Sesanti, 2011). An individual with this outlook would be hesitant of stealing the collective resources for personal use because he/she is cognizant of the ancestors who are watching his deeds, even those committed behind closed doors. He/She would be bothered by the thought of one-day sitting in the ancestry witnessing the living scavenging and suffering because he/she looted and squandered collective resources. Said differently and in the context of political participation, the African political elite should ensure political participation of the young, fearing an eye-sore when they are in the ancestry because they have left the unexposed and inexperienced to take over state power without the requisite experiences because they were not given an opportunity to learn and practice when they were young.

### **Decoloniality – Reimagining Africa**

Related to the above discussion is the question of decoloniality, one of the many failures of the liberating generation. The common mistake that the African elite have made over the past decades of political freedom is to think that it is only them who are concerned about the African perspective and the fight against colonialism. They have concluded that the generation of youth born after independence has been influenced by western values. The African elites always see the demands by this generation of youth as sponsored from outside, and thus concluded that the growing dissent is the artwork of the underground of a ‘third force.’ The youth of southern Africa, through popular radical protests against inequality, poverty, underdevelopment and neoliberalism, have taken the African elites by surprise once it occurred that the discontentment is homegrown and, in some instances, has strong Pan Africa, Black Consciousness and African communalistic values (Mabhena, 2016). The demands on the state through radical protest actions for decent and dignified housing for all and the demands for free quality decolonized higher education are all prevalent in southern African as a case in point. The state and African elites must seriously consider taking the decolonial discourse serious, and this includes dealing with the questions of coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being. All these questions raised by the youth of Africa speak to the deficit of their political participation.

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